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A

# TREATISE ON MAN;

HIS

## *INTELLECTUAL FACULTIES*

AND HIS

# EDUCATION.

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*By M. HELVETIUS.*

Honteux de m'ignorer,
Dans mon être, dans moi, je cherche à pénétrer.
*Voltaire, Dis. VI. de la Nat. de l'Homme.*

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH, WITH ADDITIONAL NOTES,

By W. HOOPER, M. D.

*A NEW AND IMPROVED EDITION.*

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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# PREFACE.

MY inducement to engage in the following work, was merely the love of mankind and of truth; from a persuasion, that to become virtuous and happy, we want only to know ourselves, and entertain just ideas of morals.

My design can scarcely be mistaken. Had I published this book in my life-time, I should, in all probability, have exposed myself to persecution, without the prospect of any personal advantage.

That I have continued to maintain the same sentiments which I advanced in my Treatise on the Understanding, is the consequence of their appearing to me the only rational principles on the subject, and of their being generally adopted, since that time, by men of the greatest learning and abilities.

Those principles are farther extended, and more accurately examined, in the present work than in the former; my reflection having suggested a number of new ideas, while I was em-

ployed in the composition. Such thoughts as are less intimately connected with the subject, are thrown into notes, at the end of each section; those only being retained in the text, which were of an explanatory nature, or served to remove objections, which could not be directly answered, without greatly encreasing the limits, and retarding the progress of the work.

The second is the most encumbered with notes, because the principles which it contains, being more particularly controvertible, require the support of a greater accumulation of proof.

It is not improper on this occasion to observe, that there are several reasons which may render a work contemptible in the opinion of the public; such as, that the author has not taken sufficient pains to merit approbation; that he is defective in abilities, or chargeable with disingenuousness. I can safely affirm, that I have nothing with which to reproach myself on the latter of those heads. It is only in prohibited publications that truth is now to be found; for in others, falsehood is discernible. The greater number of authors are in their writings, what men of the world are in their conversation: solicitous only to please, they are wholly indifferent, provided they attain their purpose, whether it be by means of falsehood or truth.

A writer

A writer who is desirous of the favour of the great, and the transitory applause of the present hour, must adopt implicitly the current principles of the time, without ever attempting to examine or question their authority ; and from this source arises the want of originality, so general among literary productions. Books of intrinsic merit, and which discover real genius, are the phænomena but of very few periods in the space of many ages ; and their appearance, like that of the sun in the forest, serves only to render the intervening darkness more conspicuous. They constitute an epoch in the history of the human understanding, and it is from the principles they contain, that future improvements in science derive their origin.

It would ill become me to say any thing in praise of this work ; I shall, therefore, only observe, in respect to its principles, that I have advanced no sentiment which was not suggested by my own reflection, nor affirmed any proposition which I do not believe to be true.

In exposing some prejudices, I may be thought perhaps, to have conducted myself with too little reserve. I have treated them with the same ingenuous freedom, which a young man, is apt to use towards an old woman, whom he is under

no inducement either to flatter or depreciate. Through the whole inquiry, truth has been my principal object; and this consideration, it is to be hoped, will stamp some value on the work. A sincere love of truth is the disposition most favourable for discovering her.

I have all along endeavoured to express my ideas with perspicuity; and have never sacrificed any sentiment to popular prepossession. If, therefore, the book be void of merit, it ought to be imputed to the fault of my judgment, and not to a depravity of heart. Few, I believe, can with justice say so much in their own favour.

To some readers this work will appear to be written with great boldness. There are periods in every country when the word *prudent* bears the same signification with *vile*; and when those productions only are esteemed for their sentiments, which are written in a style of servility.

It was once my intention to have published this book under a fictitious name, as the only means of reconciling with my own safety the desire I entertained of rendering service to my country. But, during the time I have been employed in the work, a change has happened in the circumstances and government of my fellow-citizens. The disorder, which I hoped in some

measure to remedy, is become incurable: the prospect of public utility is vanished, and I defer the publication of the work, till its author be no more.

My country has at length submitted to the yoke of despotism. She will never again produce any writer of extraordinary eminence. It is the characteristic of despotic power to extinguish both genius and virtue.

The people of this country will never more signalize themselves under the appellation of French: the nation is now so much debased as to become the contempt of Europe. No fortunate crisis can henceforth ever restore her liberty. She will expire of a consumption. Conquest alone can afford a remedy proportioned to the virulence of her disease; and the efficacy even of this, chance and circumstances must determine.

In all nations there are certain periods when the citizens, undetermined what measures they ought to take, and remaining in a state of suspense between a good and bad government, are extremely desirous of instruction, and disposed to receive it. At such a time, if a work of great merit makes its appearance, the happiest effects may be produced: but the moment once past, the people, insensible to glory, are, by the form of

their government, irresistibly inclined towards ignorance and baseness. Their minds are then like parched earth: the water of truth may rain upon them, but without producing fertility. Such is the state of France.

Henceforth, among the French, the estimation of learning will daily decline, with its utility; as it can only serve to shew in a stronger light the misery of despotism, without supplying the means of evading it.

Happiness, like the sciences, is said to advance progressively over the world. Its course is now directed towards the North. There great princes cherish the seeds of genius, and genius is ever accompanied with a high degree of public felicity.

Nothing can be more opposite than the state of the south and north parts of Europe at present. Clouds of thicker darkness are perpetually overspreading the South, produced by the mists of superstition and of Asiatic despotism. The horizon of the North becomes every day more bright and effulgent. A Catherine II. and a Frederick, render themselves dear to humanity. Convinced in their own minds of the value of truth, they encourage the cultivation of it in others, and afford their patronage to every effort by which it may be farther investigated. It is to such sovereigns that

that I dedicate this work : it is by the auspicious influence of those that the world can be enlightened.

The former brightness of the South becomes more dim, while the dawn of the North shines forth with increasing radiance. It is the North that now emits the rays which penetrate even to Austria. Every thing there hastens towards an extraordinary change. The assiduous attention bestowed by the emperor to alleviate the weight of the imposts, and improve the discipline of his army, shews plainly that he entertains a desire of becoming the darling of his subjects; that he wishes to render them happy at home, and respectable to foreign nations. The esteem for the king of Prussia, professed from his earliest years, afford a presage of his future virtues! Esteem always indicates a similarity of disposition to the object of it.

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ON

# ON MAN,

HIS

# *INTELLECTUAL FACULTIES*

AND HIS

# EDUCATION.

## CHAP. I.

### OF THE DIFFERENT POINTS OF VIEW FROM WHICH WE MAY CONSIDER MAN; OF THE INFLUENCE OF EDUCATION.

THE science of man, taken in its utmost extent, is immense; the study of it is long and painful. Man is a model exposed to the view of different artists; every one surveys it from some point of view, no one from every point.

The painter and the musician consider man; but merely with regard to the effect that colours and sounds have on his eyes and his ears.

Corneille, Racine, and Voltaire have studied him, but only in relation to the impressions that are excited in him by actions of greatness, tenderness, pity, rage, &c.

Moliere and Fontaine have considered mankind from other points of view.

Influence of education on Man.

In the study that the philosopher makes of men, his object is their happiness. This happiness is dependent on the laws under which they live, and the instructions they receive.

The perfection of these laws and instructions supposes a preliminary knowledge of the human heart and mind, with their various operations; in a word, of the obstacles to the progress of the sciences of morality, politics, and education.

Without this knowledge, what means are there to render men better and happier? The philosopher should, therefore, trace out the simple and productive principle of their intellectual faculties and their passions, the only principle that can inform him of the degree of perfection to which laws and instructions can carry them, and shew him what is the power of education over them.

I regard the understanding, the virtue, and genius of man, as the product of instruction. This idea presented in the Treatise on the Understanding appears to me invariably true; but perhaps it is not sufficiently proved. It is admitted that education has more influence over the genius and character of men, and of nations, than was imagined; and this is all that has been granted me.

The examination of this opinion will make the first part of this work. To educate mankind, furnish their minds, and render them happy, we must know of what instructions and what happiness they are susceptible.

Importance of the question proposed for examination.

Previous to the entering on this inquiry, I shall say a few words.

1. On the importance of this question.

2. On false science, to which is also given the name of education.

3. On the dryness of the subject, and the difficulty of treating it.

## CHAP. II.

### OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS QUESTION.

If it be true that the talents and the virtues of a people determine their power and their happiness, no question can be more important than this: *are the talents and virtues of each individual, the effect of his organisation, or of the education he receives?*

I am of the latter opinion, and propose to prove here what perhaps is only advanced in the Treatise on the Understanding. If I can demonstrate that man is, in fact, nothing more than the product of his education, I shall doubtless reveal an important truth to mankind. They will learn, that they have in their own hands the instrument of their greatness and their felicity, and that to be happy and powerful nothing more is requisite than to perfect the science of education.

Connection between the science of Man and the science of Government.

But by what means shall we discover whether man be in fact the produce of his education? By a thorough discussion of the question. If this examination should not give the solution, we ought still to make it; for it will be useful, as it will compel us to the study of ourselves.

Mankind are, but too often, unknown to him that governs them; yet to guide the motions of the human puppet, it is necessary to know the wires by which he is moved. Without this knowledge, what wonder is it that his motions are frequently so contrary to those which the legislature requires.

If some errors should creep into a work that treats on man, it may still be a valuable work.

What a mass of light does the knowledge of mankind throw upon the several parts of government! The ability of the groom consists in knowing all that is to be done to the animal he is to manage; and the ability of a minister, in knowing all that is to be done in the management of the people he is to govern.

The science of man makes a part of the science of government. (1) The minister should connect it with that of public affairs. (2) It is then that he will establish just laws.

Let philosophers therefore penetrate continually more and more into the abyss of the human heart, let them there search out all the principles of his actions, and let the minister, profiting by their discoveries, make of them, according to time, place and circumstances, a happy application.

If

Talents and virtues the effect of education.

If the knowledge of mankind be regarded as absolutely necessary to the legislature, nothing can be more important than the examination of a problem which implies that knowledge.

If they who are personally indifferent to this question, shall judge of it only as relative to public interest, they will perceive that of all the obstacles to the perfection of education, the greatest is to regard our talents and virtues as the effect of organisation. No opinion is more favourable to the idleness and negligence of instructors. If organisation make us almost entirely what we are, why do we reproach the master with the ignorance and stupidity of his pupils? Why, he will say, do you impute to education the faults of nature? What answer will you make him? When you admit a principle, how can you deny its immediate consequence?

On the contrary, if we prove that talents and virtues are acquisitions, we shall rouse the industry of the master, and prevent his negligence; we shall render him more assiduous in stifling the vices, and cultivating the virtues of his pupils.

The genius most ardent in carrying the instruments of education to perfection, will perceive perhaps in an infinity of those minute articles, now regarded as insignificant, the hidden seeds of our vices, our virtues, our talents, and imbecilities; and who can say to what point genius may then carry its discoveries? (3) Of this we are certain, that we are as yet ignorant of the true principles of education, and that it is at the pre-

sent day reduced almost entirely to certain false sciences, to which even ignorance is preferable.

## CHAP. III.

### OF FALSE SCIENCE, OR ACQUIRED IGNORANCE.

MAN is born ignorant; he is not born a fool; and it is not even without labour that he is made one. To be such, and to be able to extinguish in himself his natural lights, art and method must be used; instruction must heap on him error upon error; more he reads, the more numerous must be the prejudices he contracts.

If silliness be the common condition of mankind among polished nations, it is the effect of a contagious instruction; it is because they are educated by men of false science, and read silly books; for it is with books as with men, there is good and bad company. The work of merit is almost every where prohibited (4). Good Sense urges its publication; bigotry forbids it, for bigotry would command the world; she is, therefore, interested in the propagation of folly. Her aim is to blind mankind, and bewilder them in a labyrinth of false science. It is not enough that men be ignorant; ignorance is the middle point between true and false learning. The ignorant man is as much above the falsely learned, as he is below him of real science.

It is to be attributed to bad instructors.

science. The desire of superstition is to render man stupid; her fear is that he may become enlightened. Now to whom will she commit the care of making him a brute? To the scholastics, for of all the sons of Adam they are the most stupid and conceited (5). "The "mere school divine, according to Rabelais, holds the "same rank among men as that animal does among "beasts, who neither labours like the ox, nor bears a "burden like the mule, nor barks at a thief like a dog, "but like the ape, soils all, breaks all, bites the passen-"ger, and is noxious to every one."

The scholastic is powerful in words, and weak in argument, therefore, what sort of men does he form? Such as are learnedly absurd and stupidly proud (6). With regard to stupidity, I have already said it is of two sorts, one natural, the other acquired; the one the effect of ignorance, the other of instruction. Now of these two sorts of ignorance or stupidity, which is the most incurable? The latter. The man who knows nothing may learn; it is only requisite to excite in him the desire of knowledge. But he who is falsely learned, and has by degrees lost his reason when he thought to improve it, has purchased his stupidity at too dear a rate ever to renounce it*. His mind overloaded with the weight of a learned ignorance, can never mount up to the truth; it has lost the spring

* A young painter having drawn a picture in the bad manner of his master, shewed it to Raphael, and asked what he thought of it? I think, says Raphael, if you knew nothing, you would soon know something.

that should raise it up. The knowledge he must acquire is connected with that he must forget. To place a certain number of truths in his memory, it is frequently necessary to displace the same number of errors. Now this displacement requires time, and if it be at last effected, the man is formed too late.

We are astonished at the age the Greeks and Romans acquired maturity. What various talents did they display in their adolescence? At twenty, Alexander, already a man of letters and a great general, undertook the conquest of the East. At the same age Scipio and Hannibal formed the greatest projects, and executed the most difficult enterprises. Before the age of maturity Pompey, the conqueror of Europe, Asia, and Africa, had filled the earth with his glory. Now how did these Greeks and Romans become at once men of letters, orators, generals, and ministers of state? How did they qualify themselves for all sorts of employments in their republics, exercise them, and even frequently abdicate them, at an age when no one in our days is capable of assuming them? Were the men of antiquity different from the moderns? Was their organisation more perfect? No doubtless. For in the sciences, and the arts of navigation, physics, mechanics, the mathematics, &c. we know that the moderns excel the ancients.

The superiority the latter have for so long a time preserved in morality, politics, and legislation, is therefore to be regarded as the effect of their education. The instruction of youth was not then confided to scholastics, but philosophers. The object of these philosophers

philosophers was to form heroes and great politicians. The story of the pupil was reflected on the master; that was his reward.

The object of an instructor is no longer the same. What interest has he in exalting the mind and soul of his pupils? None. What is his aim? To weaken their natural abilities, to make them superstitious; to disjoint, if I may be allowed the expression, the wings of their genius; to stifle in their minds all true science, and in their hearts every patriotic virtue (7).

The golden ages of these school divines were the ages of ignorance, whose darkness, before the time Luther and Calvin, covered the earth. Then, says an English philosopher, superstition reigned over all nations, "Men were changed, like Nebuchadnezzar, into "brutes, and being like mules, bridled, saddled, and "and loaded with heavy burdens, they groaned under "the weight of superstition; but at last some of these "mules began to kick, and throw off at once their "loads and their riders."

No reformation can be hoped in the plan of instruction so long as it is confided to the scholastics. Under such tutors the science taught will never be any thing more than the science of errors; and the ancients will preserve that superiority over the moderns in morality, politics, and legislation, which they owe not to the superiority of their organisation, but, as I have already said, to that of their instruction.

I have now shewn the futility of false learning, and have evinced the importance of this work. It remains to speak of the dryness of the subject.

CHAP.

# CHAP. IV.

## OF THE DRYNESS OF THE SUBJECT, AND THE DIFFICULTY OF TREATING IT.

The examination of the question I have proposed requires a refined and deep discussion. Every discussion of this sort is tiresome.

That a man who is a real friend to humanity, and already habituated to the fatigue of attention, should read this book without disgust, I should not be surprised, and his approbation would doubtless content me, if from the beginning, to render this work useful, I had not proposed to make it entertaining. Now what flowers can be thrown on a question so serious and important. I would instruct the man of common capacity, and in almost every nation men of this sort are incapable of attention: hence proceeds disgust: and it is in France especially that this sort of men are the most common.

I passed ten years at Paris; the spirit of bigotry and fanaticism was not then predominant there. If I may believe the public report, it is now the fashion with the higher classes to be more and more indifferent to works of reflection. Nothing affects them but a ridiculous description (8), which satisfies their malignity without disturbing their indolence. I renounce, therefore, the hope of pleasing them.

Whatever

Whatever pains I might take, I should never diffuse sufficient entertainment over a subject so dry and serious.

I have observed, however, that if we judge of the French nation by their works, either the people are less light and frivolous (9) than they are thought to be, or the spirit of the men of letters is very different from that of the nation. The ideas of the latter appear to me grand and elevated; let them, therefore, write on, and rest assured, notwithstanding national partialities, that they will every where find just judges of their merit. I have only one thing to advise them, and that is, sometimes to dare to despise the opinion of a single nation, and to remember, that a mind truly great will attach itself to such subjects only as are interesting to the whole race of mankind.

This of which I here treat is of that nature. I shall only repeat the principles advanced in the Treatise on the Understanding, to examine them more thoroughly, to present them in a new point of view, and to draw new consequences from them.

In geometry every problem not fully resolved, may become the object of a new demonstration. It is the same in morality and politics.

Let no one therefore decline the examination of a question so important, and whose solution moreover requires the exposition of truths hitherto but little known.

*Is the difference in the minds of men the effect of their different organisations or education?* That is the object of my inquiry.

SECTION

No two persons receive the same education.

# SECTION I.

THE EDUCATION NECESSARILY DIFFERENT IN DIFFERENT MEN, IS PERHAPS THE CAUSE OF THAT INEQUALITY IN UNDERSTANDINGS HITHERTO ATTRIBUTED TO THE UNEQUAL PERFECTION OF THEIR ORGANS.

## CHAP. I.

### NO TWO PERSONS RECEIVE THE SAME EDUCATION.

I STILL learn; my instruction is not yet finished: when will it be? When I shall be no longer sensible; at my death. The course of my life is properly nothing more than a long course of education.

What is necessary in order that two individuals should receive precisely the same education? That they should be in precisely the same positions and the same circumstances. Now such an hypothesis is impossible: it is therefore evident, that no two persons can receive the same instructions.

But why put off the term of our education to the utmost

Commencement of education.

most period of life? Why not confine it to the time expressly set apart for instruction, that is, to the period of infancy and adolescence?

I am content to confine it to that period; and I will prove in like manner, that it is impossible for two men to acquire precisely the same ideas.

## CHAP. II.

### OF THE MOMENT AT WHICH EDUCATION BEGINS.

It is at the very instant a child receives motion and life that it receives its first instruction: it is sometimes even in the womb where it is conceived, that it learns to distinguish between sickness and health. The mother however delivered, the child struggles and cries; hunger gripes it, it feels a want, and that want opens its lips, makes it seize, and greedily suck the nourishing breast. When some months have passed, its sight is distinct, its organs are fortified, it becomes by degrees susceptible of all impressions; then the senses of seeing, hearing, tasting, touching, smelling, in a word, all the inlets to the mind are set open; then all the objects of nature rush thither in crowds, and

and engrave an infinity of ideas in the memory*. In these first moments what can be true instructors of infancy? The various sensations it feels: these are so many instructions it receives.

If two children have the same preceptor, if they are taught to distinguish their letters, to read and repeat their catechism, &c. they are supposed to receive the same education. The philosopher judges otherwise: according to him, the true preceptors of a child are the objects that surround him; these are the instructors to whom he owes almost all his ideas.

## CHAP. III.

### OF THE INSTRUCTORS OF CHILDHOOD.

A SHORT history of the infancy of man will bring us acquainted with them. He no sooner sees the light than a thousand sounds strike his ears; he hears nothing but a confused noise; a thousand bodies offer themselves to his sight, but present nothing but objects imperfectly defined. It is by insensible degrees that an infant learns to hear and see, to perceive and rectify the errors of one sense by another.†

* See Mr. Buffon's eloquent and admirable discourses on man.

† The senses never deceive us; objects constantly make the

External objects the best preceptors of infancy.

Being constantly struck by the same sensations in the presence of the same objects, he thereby acquires a more complete remembrance of them, in proportion as the same action of the objects is repeated on him; and this action of them we should regard as the most considerable part of his education.

The child in the mean time grows; he walks and walks alone; numberless falls then teach him to preserve the equilibrium of his body, and to stand firmly on his legs; the more painful the falls, the more instructive they prove, and the more adroitly, attentively, and cautiously he walks.

The child grows strong; he runs, he is already able to leap the little canals that traverse and water the garden. It is then that by repeated trials and falls he learns to proportion his leaps to the width of the canals.

He sees a stone fall into the water and sink to the bottom, while a piece of wood floats on the surface: from this instance he acquires the first idea of gravity.

If he take the stone and the wood out of the water, and by chance they both fall on his feet, the unequal degree of pain occasioned by their fall, engraves more

impressions on us they ought to make. If a square tower appears round at a certain distance, it is because at that distance the rays reflected from the tower must be confounded, and make it appear as it does; it is because there are certain cases in which the real forms of bodies cannot be ascertained without the united testimony of several senses.

strongly

strongly on his memory the idea of their unequal weight and hardness.

If he chance to throw the same stone against one of the flower-pots placed on the borders of a canal, he will then learn that some bodies are broken by a blow that others resist.

There is therefore no man of discernment who must not see in all objects, so many tutors charged with the education of our infancy*.

But are not these instructors the same for all? No The chance is not precisely the same for any two persons; but suppose it were, and that two children owed their dexterity in walking, running, and leaping to their falls; I say, that as it is impossible they should both have precisely the same number of falls, and equally painful, chance cannot furnish them both with the same instructions.

Place two children on a plain, in a wood, a theatre, an assembly, or a shop. They will not, by their natural position, be struck precisely in the same manner, nor consequently affected with the same sensations. What different subjects moreover are by daily occurrences incessantly offered to the view of these two children.

* If I have here described the several states of infancy in a cursory manner, it is because I am fearful of tiring the reader. What imports him to know the time the child is in passing through the several periods? It is sufficient that they are passing through. It is by no means necessary that my narration should be as long as the infancy of man.

Two

Difference of the impressions produced by different objects.

Two brothers travel with their parents, and to arrive at their native place they must traverse long chains of mountains. The eldest follows his father by the short and rugged road. What does he see? Nature in all the forms of horror; mountains of ice that hide their heads among the clouds, massy rocks that hang over the traveller's head, fathomless caverns, and ridges of arid hills, from which torrents rush with a tremendous roar. The younger follows his mother through the most frequented roads, where nature appears in all her pleasing forms. What objects does he behold? Every where hills planted with vines and fruitful trees, and vallies where the wandering streams divide the meadows, peopled by the browzing herds.

These two brothers have, in the same journey, seen very different prospects, and received very different impressions. Now a thousand incidents of the same nature may produce the same effects. Our life is nothing more, so to say, than a long chain of similar incidents; let men never flatter themselves, therefore, with being able to give two children precisely the same education.

What influence moreover may a difference of instruction, occasioned by a trifling difference in surrounding objects, have on the mind? Who does not know that a small number of dissimilar ideas, combined with those which two men already have in common, can produce a total difference in their manner of seeing and judging?

Different impressions produced by the same objects.

Supposing, however, that chance should constantly offer the same objects to two persons, does it present them when their minds are precisely in the same situation, and when consequently those objects will make the same impressions on them ?

## CHAP. IV.

### OF THE DIFFERENT IMPRESSIONS WHICH OBJECTS MAKE ON US.

That different objects produce different sensations is self-evident. Experience, moreover, teaches us that the same objects excite different impressions, according to the moment at which they present themselves ; and it is, perhaps, to these different impressions, that we are principally to attribute the diversity and great inequality that is to be found in men educated in the same country, in the same habits and manners, and who have moreover the same objects before their eyes.

There are in the mind certain moments of perfect repose, when its surface is not agitated by the least breath of passion. The objects that then present themselves sometimes engage our whole attention ; we examine more at leisure their different appearances, and the

The impressions of objects depend on accidental circumstances.

the impressions they make on our memory are much more complete and durable.

Occurrences of this sort are very common, especially in early youth. A child commits a fault, and for punishment is shut up by himself in a chamber. What does he do? He sees in the window some pots with flowers, he plucks some of them, he considers their colours, and remarks their shades; his idle situation seems to give an additional discernment to his sight. It is then with the child as with the blind; if the latter have commonly the senses of hearing and feeling more keen than other men, it is because he is not like them disturbed by the action of the light upon his eyes, because he is the more attentive, and more concentered within himself; and, lastly, to supply the sense he wants, he is, as M. Diderot remarks, more interested to improve those senses that remain.

The impressions that objects make on us depend principally on the moment at which those objects strike us. In the example just mentioned, it is the attention that the child is, as it were, forced to give to the only objects that are exposed to his sight, which makes him discover in the colours and form of the flowers, those nice differences that, a distracted view, or a superficial glance would not have permitted him to observe. It is thus that a punishment, or some similar incident, frequently determines the taste of a young man, and makes him a painter of flowers; by first giving him some knowledge of their beauty, and then a love for those pictures that represent them.

Now to how many similar incidents is the education of youth liable? and how can we imagine them to be the same in any two individuals? How many other causes, moreover, prevent two children, whether at home or at college, from receiving the same education?

## CHAP. V.

### OF A COLLEGIATE EDUCATION.

Children that have been brought up in the same college, are supposed to have received the same education. But at what age do they enter the college? At seven or eight years. Now at that age they have already charged their memories with ideas, which being partly owing to chance, and partly acquired in the parental abode, arise from the state, the character, the fortune, and wealth of their parents. Can we then be surprised that children entering a college with ideas frequently so different, should discover more or less ardour for study, more or less taste for certain branches of science; and that the ideas they have already acquired being united with those they receive in common in the schools, should produce in them a considerable alteration? From ideas thus altered, and combining again among themselves, must frequently arise unexpected productions.

Hence

Of domestic education.

Hence that inequality in minds, and that diversity of tastes observed in the pupils of the same college*.

Is it the same with domestic education?

## CHAP. VI.

### OF DOMESTIC EDUCATION.

THIS sort of education is doubtless more uniform; it is more the same. Two children are brought up under their parents, have the same preceptor, nearly the same objects before their eyes; and read the same books. The inequality of age is the only difference that appears to have any influence on their instruction; would you render that ineffectual? Suppose then these two brothers to be twins? But have they had the same nurse? What does that signify? It signifies a great deal. How can we doubt the influence of the disposition of the nurse on the child? At least they made no doubt of it in Greece, as is evi-

* I have elsewhere observed, that it is to chance, that is to say, to what is not taught by a master, we owe the greatest part of our instruction. He whose knowledge should be confined to the truths he learns from his preceptor, or his tutor, and to the facts contained in the small number of books that are read in the classes, would doubtless be the most ignorant child in the world.

dent by the consequence in which the Lacedæmonian nurses were held.

In fact, says Plutarch, if the Spartan does not cry even at the breast; if he be insensible to fear, and already patient under sufferings, he owes it to his nurse. In France, where I live, as in Greece, the choice of a nurse therefore cannot be matter of indifference.

But suppose the same nurse to have suckled these twins, and to have brought them up with the same care. Is it to be imagined, when returned to their parents, the father and mother will have precisely the same degree of affection for these two children? and that the preference imperceptibly given to one of the two, will have no influence on his education?

Suppose, moreover, that the father and mother should regard them equally, will it be the same with the domestics? Will not the tutor have a favourite? and will the fondness that he shews for one of the two children be long unnoticed by the other? The different passions, or patience of the master, and the softness or severity of his lectures, will they have no effect on the children? In the last place, will these two twins enjoy the same state of health?

In the career of the arts and the sciences, suppose them both to set off with an equal pace, if the first be stopped by some disorder, and suffer the other to advance too far before him, his studies will become disgusting to him. If a child lose the hope of pre-eminence, if he be obliged in a certain sense, to acknowledge a number of superiors, he becomes thereby incapable

To excite emulation the principal point in education.

incapable of a vigorous application: even the fear of punishment is then ineffectual. This fear causes a child to contract a habit of attention, makes him learn to read, and perform all that he is enjoined; but it will not inspire him with that ardour for study which is the only pledge of great acquirements. It is emulation that produces genius, and a desire of becoming illustrious that creates talents. It is from the moment when the love of glory fires the breast, and takes possession of the man, that we are to date the progress of his intellectual faculties. I have always thought that the science of education is, perhaps, nothing more than a knowledge of the means of exciting emulation, which may be lighted up or extinguished by a single word. A commendation bestowed on the care with which a child examines an object, and the exact description he gives of it, has sometimes been sufficient to excite in him that sort of attention to which he has afterwards owed the superiority of his understanding. A collegiate, or domestic education is therefore never the same for any two individuals.

From the education of childhood we will proceed to that of youth. Let not this examination be regarded as superfluous. This second education is the most important: mankind have then other instructors, with whom it is proper to be acquainted.

It is in youth, moreover, that our tastes and our talents are formed. This second education, the least uniform, and the most abandoned to chance, is, at

the same time, the most proper to confirm the truth of my opinion.

## CHAP. VII.

### OF THE EDUCATION OF YOUTH.

It is at leaving the college and entering the world that the education of youth begins. It is less uniform than that of childhood, but more dependent on chance, and doubtless more important. The youth is then attacked by a greater number of sensations: all that surrounds him strikes him, and strikes him forcibly.

It is at the age when certain passions spring up, that all the objects of nature agitate and impel him the most strongly. It is then that he receives the most efficacious instruction; it is then that his tastes and his character are determined; and, lastly, that being more free, and more himself, the passions excited in his heart determine his habits, and frequently all the future conduct of his life.

In children the difference of understanding and character is not always very obvious. Engaged in the same sort of studies, subject to the same discipline, and moreover without passions, their exterior is sufficiently similar.

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Objects which instruct youth on entering the world.

The seed, that by springing up, shall one day make so much difference in their tastes, is either not yet formed, or at least is yet imperceptible. I compare two children to two men sitting on a bank, but with their backs to each other. If they rise up and walk in the direction they sat, they will insensibly become further distant, and soon lose sight of each other, unless by again changing their direction, some accident make them again approach.

The resemblance of children in schools or colleges is the effect of constraint. When they leave the college the constraint ceases. Then begins, as I have already said, the second education of man; an education the more directed by chance, as youth on entering the world find themselves in the midst of a greater number of objects. Now the more the surrounding objects are multiplied and diversified, the less can the father or the master depend on the result of their impression, and the less part the one and the other have in the education of a young man.

The new and principal instructors of youth are the form of government under which they live, and the manners that form of government gives to a nation.

Masters and pupils are all subject to these instructors; these are the principal, but, however, not the only instructors of youth; among these I also reckon the rank a young man holds in the world, his wealth or indigence, the societies with which he is connect-

ted* ; and, lastly, his friends, his books, and his mistresses. Now it is on chance that depend his opulence, or poverty, and the choice of his society (10), his friends, his books, and his mistresses. It is on chance, therefore, that depends the choice of the principal part of his instructors. It is chance, moreover, that places him in this or that position, excites, extinguishes or modifies his tastes and passions ; and that has, consequently, the greatest part in forming his character. The character of a man is the immediate effect of his passions, and his passions are often the immediate effects of his situations.

The most striking characters are sometimes the produce of an infinity of little accidents. It is from an infinity of threads of hemp that the largest cables are formed (11). There is no change that chance cannot produce in the character of a man. But why do these changes almost always operate in a manner unperceived by himself? Because to perceive them, he must have a most severe and penetrating eye on himself. Now pleasure, idleness, ambition, poverty, &c. equally divert him from this observation. Every thing turns him away from himself. A man has, moreover, so much respect for himself, so much veneration for his

* Does a man seek the company of the learned? Does he live habitually with those of superior abilities? He becomes enlightened. It is to a desire I always had to converse with such men, said a celebrated author to me one day, that I owe my feeble talents.

OWN

own conduct, as being the consequence of such sagacious and profound reflection, that he can rarely permit himself to examine it: pride forbids, and pride is readily obeyed.

Chance has, therefore, a necessary and considerable influence on our education. The events of life are frequently the produce of the most trifling incidents. I know this assertion disgusts our vanity, which constantly assigns great causes to effects that appear to it of great consequence. To destroy the illusions of pride, I shall prove, by the aid of facts, that it is to the most trifling incidents the most illustrious citizens have sometimes owed their talents. Hence I conclude, that chance acts in a like manner on all mankind, and if its effects on ordinary minds are less remarked, it is merely because minds of this sort are themselves less remarkable.

## CHAP. VIII.

### OF THE CHANCES TO WHICH WE OFTEN OWE ILLUSTRIOUS CHARACTERS.

For my first example, I shall cite M. Vaucanson: his pious mother had a spiritual director, who lived in a cell, to which the hall where the clock was placed served as an antichamber. The mother paid frequent visits

visits to this director. Her son waited for her in the antichamber: there alone, and having nothing to do, he wept with weariness, while his mother wept with repentance. However, as we commonly weep and weary ourselves as little as possible, and as in a state of vacation there are no sensations indifferent, young Vaucanson was soon struck with the uniform motion of the pendulum, and desirous of discovering its cause. His curiosity was roused; he approached the clock case, and saw, through the crevices, the wheels that turn each other; discovered a part of the mechanism, and guessed at the rest. He projected a similar machine, which he executed in wood with a knife, and at last was able to make a clock more or less perfect. Encouraged by this first success his taste for mechanics was determined. His talents displayed themselves, and the same genius that enabled him to make a clock in wood, showed him the possibility of forming a fluting automaton.

A chance of the same sort kindled the genius of Milton. Cromwell died, his son succeeded him, and was driven out of England. Milton participated his ill-fortune; he lost the place of secretary to the protector, was imprisoned, released, and driven into exile. At last he returned, retired to the country, and there, in the leisure of retreat and disgrace, he executed the poem which he had projected in his youth, and which has placed him in the rank of the greatest of men.

If Shakspeare had been, like his father, always a dealer in wool; if his imprudence had not obliged him

to

to quit his commerce, and his native place; if he had not associated with libertines, and stolen deer from the park of a nobleman; had not been pursued for the theft, and obliged to take refuge in London; engage in a company of actors; and, at last, disgusted with being an indifferent performer (12), he had not turned author; the prudent Shakspeare had never been the celebrated Shakespeare; and whatever ability he might have acquired in the wool trade, his name would never have reflected lustre on England.

It was a chance nearly similar that determined the taste of Moliere for the stage. His grandfather loved the theatre, and frequently carried him thither. The young man lived in dissipation; the father observing it, asked in anger, if his son was to be made an actor. Would to God, replied the grandfather, he was as good an actor as Montrose. Those words struck young Moliere; he took a disgust to his trade, and France owes its greatest comic writer to that accidental reply. Moliere, a skilful tapestry-maker, had never else been cited among the great men of his nation.

Corneille loved; he made verses for his mistress, became a poet, composed Melite (13). then Cinna, Rodogune, &c. is the honour of his country, and an object of emulation for posterity. The discreet Corneille had remained a lawyer, and composed briefs that would have been forgotten with the causes he defended. Thus it is, that the devotion of a mother, the death of Cromwell, deer-stealing, the exclamation of

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Genius the effect of chance.

an old man, and the beauty of a woman, have given five illustrious characters to Europe*.

I should never have done if I would enumerate all the writers celebrated for their talents, and who owed those talents to similar incidents†. Many philosophers adopt my opinion on this particular. M. Bonnet‡ compares with me, genius to a lens, that burns in one point only. Genius, according to us, is but the produce of a strong and concentered attention to any art or science; but whence does this attention proceed? From a lively taste we feel for that art or science. Now this taste is not the mere gift of nature§. Is a man born without ideas? He is born also

* It will doubtless be said, that similar incidents would not produce similar effects, except on men organised in a certain manner; I shall answer this objection in the next section.

† It will not be improper, however, to add here one more instance; Newton, in his younger days, was a student at Cambridge, but during the time of the plague retired into the country. As he was reading under an apple-tree, one of the fruit fell and struck him a smart blow on the head. When he observed the smallness of the apple he was surprised at the force of the stroke. This led him to consider the accelerating motion of falling bodies, whence he duduced the principles of gravity, and laid the foundation of that philosophy which will reflect honour on the English nation, when, perhaps, the names of Cressy, Agincourt, and Blenheim will be utterly forgotten. T.

‡ See his Analytical Essay on the Faculties of the Mind.

§ If children have seldom the taste we would give them, it is the fault of their instructors, and not that of their organisation.

without

The power of chance exemplified in Rousseau.

without tastes. We may, therefore regard them as acquisitions arising from the situations in which we are placed*. Genius then, is the remote produce of incidents or chances nearly similar to those I have cited (14).

M. Rousseau is not of this opinion: he is, however, himself an instance of the power of chance.

On entering the world fortune placed him in the train of an ambassador. A bickering with that minister made him quit the political career (15), and follow that of the arts and sciences. His choice lay between eloquence and music; equally adapted to succeed in both those arts, his taste remained for some time undetermined; a particular series of circumstances made him at last prefer eloquence; a series of another kind would have made him a musician. Who knows if the favours of a fair singer would not have produced that effect (16). No one at least can affirm, that love could not have made an Orpheus of the French Plato. But what particular incident made M. Rousseau enter the career of eloquence? I do not know; that is his secret; all that I can say is, that in this pursuit his first success was sufficient to determine his choice.

* The only disposition to science a man has at his birth, is the faculty of comparing and combining. In fact, all the operations of his mind are necessarily reduced to the observing of the relations which objects have to him, and among themselves. In the next section I shall examine what this faculty is in man.

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The power of chance exemplified in Rousseau.

The academy of Dijon proposed a prize for eloquence. It was a whimsical subject*; the question was, *Whether the sciences be more hurtful than useful to society?* The only striking manner of treating this question was to take part against the sciences. M. Rousseau was sensible of this; and composed on this subject an eloquent discourse, that deserved and obtained great encomiums†. This success formed the remarkable epoch of his life. Hence arose his glory, his misfortunes, and his paradoxes.

Charmed with the beauty of his own discourse, the maxims of the orator (17) soon became those of the philosopher; and from that moment, devoted to the love of paradoxes, nothing was difficult to him. Was it necessary to maintain, in order to defend his opinion,

* He that proposed this prize probably thought, that the only way to become equally estimable with any other, was to prove, that any other is as ignorant as himself.

† A man who is master of a fine style, and is well versed in sophistry, will always shine by taking the paradoxical side of a question. He that should attempt to prove that we see the light of the sun at mid-day, how justly soever his arguments were ranged and how beautiful soever his language, would have but few readers. Whereas, he that should assert we see the sun's light at midnight, and support his assertion in pleasing language, by something like argument, would have many admirers. For the human mind, though not convinced, is always pleased to find the appearance of argument where it has no right to expect any argument at all. T.

that

The power of chance exemplified in Rousseau.

that the man absolutely brutal, without art, without industry, and inferior to every known savage, is notwithstanding more virtuous and happy than the polished citizen of London or Amsterdam? he was ready to maintain it.

The dupe of his own eloquence, and content with the title of an orator, he renounced that of a philosopher, and his errors became the consequence of his first success. The least causes have often produced the greatest effects. Chagrined at last by contradictions, or perhaps too fond of singularity, M. Rousseau quitted Paris and his friends: he retired to Montmorenci (18). He there composed and published his Emilius; and was pursued by envy, ignorance and hypocrisy. Esteemed by all Europe for his eloquence, he was persecuted in France. They applied to him this passage, *cruciatur ubi est, laudatur ubi non est**. Obliged at last to retire to Swisserland, and continually more irritated against persecution, he there wrote his famous letter addressed to the archbishop of Paris. Thus it is that all the ideas of a man, all his glory, and all his misfortunes, are frequently formed into a series by the invisible power of a first event. M. Rousseau, therefore, as well as an infinity of illustrious men, may be considered as one of the chefs d'œuvres of chance.

* This sentence is applicable to almost every philosopher whose writings have obtained the public esteem.

Great effects produced by trifling causes.

Let me not be reproached with having stopped to consider the causes to which great men have so frequently owed their talents; my subject obliged me to it. I shall not grow tedious by details. I know that the public is fond of great talents, and that the trifling causes by which they are produced appears of little consequence. I see with pleasure a river roll its waves majestically through the plain, but it is with labour my imagination mounts to its source, to see it assemble the volume of waters necessary to its course. Objects present themselves to us in masses; it is with weariness we attend to their decomposition. I cannot persuade myself without difficulty, that the comet which traverses with such rapidity our mundane system, and menaces its ruin, is nothing more than a certain composition of invisible atoms.

In morals, as in physics, we are struck by the great alone: we constantly assign great causes to great effects; we would make the signs in the zodiac announce the fall or revolution of empires. Yet how many crusades have been undertaken or suspended; how many revolutions accomplished or prevented; how many wars kindled or extinguished, by the intrigues of a priest, a woman, or a minister. It is for want of secret anecdotes, that we do not every where find the glove of the duchess of Marlborough*.

* The physicians say, that a great acrimony in the seminal

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Method of profiting by the operation of chance.

Let what I here say of empires be applied to individuals: it will appear in like manner, that their exaltation or disgrace, their happiness or misery, are the produce of a certain series of circumstances, of an infinity of chances unforeseen, and apparently insignificant. I compare the little incidents that produce the great events of our lives, to the hairy fibres of a root that insinuate themselves insensibly into the clefts of a rock, and there increase that they may one day spring up.

Chance*, therefore has, and always will have a part in our education, and especially in that of men of genius; therefore, would you increase their number in a nation, observe the means that are used by chance to inspire mankind with a desire of becoming illustrious. This observation made, place them expressly and frequently in the same positions that chance places them but seldom: this is the only way to make them numerous.

The moral education of mankind is now almost en-

matter was the cause of the violent passion of Henry VIII. for women. It is therefore to this acrimony England owes the destruction of popery. History would perhaps degrade its dignity, if it were always to search out in this manner the secret causes of great events: but it would be far more instructive.

* I must inform the reader, that by the word Chance, I mean the unknown concatenation of causes proper to produce such or such an effect, and that I never use the word in any other sense.

tirely abandoned to chance. To render it perfect, the plan must be directed by public utility, and founded on simple and invariable principles; this is the only method to diminish the influence it receives from chance, and to obviate the contradictions that are found, and must necessarily be found, among all the various precepts of modern education.

## CHAP. IX.

### OF THE PRINCIPAL CAUSES OF THE CONTRADICTIONS IN THE PRECEPTS OF EDUCATION.

In Europe, and especially in the catholic countries, if all the precepts of education are contradictory, it is because public instruction is there confided to two powers, whose interests are opposite, and whose precepts therefore must be different and contradictory:

The one is the spiritual power,
The other is the temporal power.

The strength and grandeur of the latter depends on the strength and grandeur of the empire it commands. The real strength of a prince consists in the strength of

of the nation; when that ceases to be respected the prince ceases to be powerful. He desires, and ought to desire, that his subjects be brave, industrious, learned, and virtuous. Is it the same with the spiritual power? No; its interest is not the same. The power of the priest depends on the superstition and stupid credulity of the people. It is of little significance to him that they be learned; the less they know the more docile they will be to his dictates. The interest of the spiritual power is not connected with that of a nation, but with that of a sect.

Two nations are at war; what is it to the pope which is the master and which the slave, if the conqueror and conquered are both to be subject to him? If the French sink under the power of the Portuguese; if the house of Braganza mounts the throne of the Bourbons, the pope sees nothing in it but an increase of his authority. What does the sacerdotal power require of a nation? A blind submission, a credulity without bounds, a puerile and contagious fear. Whether the nation renders itself renowned for its talents and patriotic virtues, is what the clergy concern themselves little about. Great talents and great virtues are almost unknown in Spain, Portugal, and in all parts where the spiritual power is most formidable.

Ambition, it is true, is common to both powers, but the means by which it is gratified are very different. To raise itself to the highest point of grandeur, the one must exalt the passions of men, and the other debase them.

Ambition and artifices of ecclesiastics.

If it be to a love of the public good, to justice, to riches, and glory, that the temporal power owes its warriors, its magistrates, its merchants, and men of letters; if it be by the commerce of its towns, the valour of its troops, the equity of its senate, and the genius of its literati, that the prince renders his nation respectable among others, the strong passions directed to the general good then serve as the basis of his grandeur.

The ecclesiastical body, on the contrary, found their grandeur on the destruction of those very passions. The priest is ambitious, but ambition is odious to him in the laity; it thwarts his designs. The project of the priest is to extinguish every desire in man, to make him disgusted with wealth and power, and by that disgust to appropriate both of them to himself (19). Of this we are certain, that the system of religion has been constantly directed by this plan.

At the time that christianity was established, what did they preach? *The community of property.* Who offered himself as the depository of the goods that were to be in common? The priest. Who violated the deposit, and made himself the proprietor? The priest. When the rumour of the end of the world was spread abroad, by whom was it authenticated? The priest. The report was favourable to his designs, he hoped, that struck with a panic, mankind would be anxious about one matter only (a matter in reality of importance) that of their salvation. Life, they said, is but a pas-

Ambition and artifices of ecclesiastics.

a passage: heaven is our inheritance; why then should we give ourselves up to earthly pleasures? If discourses of this kind did not entirely detach the laity from earthly enjoyments, it at least weaned them from the love of their relations, of glory, of the public good, and of their country. Heroes then became rare; and sovereigns, struck with the hope of mighty possessions in Heaven, consented sometimes to commit to a priest a part of their terrestrial authority. The priest seized it, and to preserve it depreciated true glory and true virtue. It was no longer permitted to honour such characters as Minos, Lycurgus, Codrus, Aristides, Timoleon; in a word, the defenders and benefactors of their country. Other models were proposed, other names were inscribed in the calendar; and instead of the ancient heroes, were seen the names of St. Anthony, St. Crispin, St. Claire, St. Fiacre, St. Francis (20); in short, the names of all those solitary wretches, who dangerous to society by the example of their stupid religion, retired to cloisters and deserts, there to vegetate and end their useless days.

By such models the priests hoped to accustom mankind to regard this life as a short journey. They then hoped that being without desires for terrestrial goods, and without friendship for those they should meet on their journey, they would become equally indifferent to their own happiness and that of their posterity. In fact, if life be nothing more than a baiting-place, why should we be so interested in the affairs that con-

cern it? A traveller does not repair the walls of an inn where he is to pass one night only.

To secure their grandeur, and satisfy their ambition, the spiritual and temporal powers must, therefore, in every country, employ very different means. Charged in common with the instruction of the public, they must engrave on the hearts and minds of men precepts that are contradictory, and relative to the interest that one has in kindling, and the other in extinguishing the passions*.

That these two powers, however, equally preach probity, I allow. But they do not attach the same meaning to the word; and modern Rome, under the government of the pope, has not certainly the same idea of virtue that the ancient Romans had under the consulate of the elder Brutus. The dawn of reason begins to appear; men now know that the same words do not every where convey the same ideas. What therefore is now required of an author? That he annex clear ideas to the terms he uses. The reign of the dark scholastics may disappear; the theologians will not perhaps always impose on the people and governments. Of this we may rest assured, that they will not at least preserve their power by the means they have acquired it. Circumstances have changed with the

* To attempt to destroy the passions of men, is to attempt to destroy their action. Does the theologian rail at the passions? he is the pendulum that mocks its spring, and the effect that mistakes its cause.

times;

times: the necessity of the passions is now confessed; it is found, that by their preservation, that of empires is secured. Passions are, in effect, strong desires, and these desires may be either conformable or contrary to the public welfare. If avarice and intolerance be hurtful and criminal passions, it is not so with the desire to render ourselves illustrious by talents and patriotic virtues (28). By annihilating the desires, you annihilate the mind; every man without passions has within him no principle of action, no motive to act.

You are, O catholic clergy! rich and powerful upon the earth, but your power may be destroyed with that of the nations you command. By degrading them still more, they may be conquered by others, and will cease to be under your subjection. Even your own interest requires that men should continue to be excited by passions and wants; to stifle them in man you must change his nature.

O venerable theologians! O brutes! O my brethren! abandon the ridiculous project: study the human heart, examine the springs by which it is moved, and if you have not yet any clear idea of morality and polities (22), forbear to teach them. Pride has led you too long astray: remember the ingenious fable of the birth of Momus. The moment he saw the day, says a great poet, the infant god filled Olympus with his cries; the celestial court was stunned: to quiet him, each one gave the child a play-thing. Jupiter, who had just then created man, gave him to Momus, and

ever

Contradictory precepts inculcated in youth.

ever since man has been the puppet of folly. Now among the puppets of this sort, the most rueful, proud, and ridiculous, is a doctor of divinity (23). O theological puppet! do not persist in destroying the passions, they are the vital principles of a state (24). Employ yourself in promoting the general good; endeavour to trace out a plan of instruction, whose clear and simple principles shall all center in the happiness of the public.

How far distant are we from such a plan of instruction? Parents and masters, with little harmony among themselves, are equally ignorant of what children ought to be taught. Their ideas or education are yet confused, and thence arises that glaring contradiction in all their precepts.

## CHAP. X.

### EXAMPLES OF CONTRADICTORY PRECEPTS INCULCATED IN EARLY YOUTH.

If, in order to show more sensibly the contradiction in all the precepts of our education, I am obliged to descend to a more familiar style, the subject will plead my excuse. It is in the religious seminaries destined for

Contradictory precepts inculcated in youth.

for the instruction of young ladies, that these contradictions are most glaring. Suppose therefore I enter a convent: it is eight in the morning, the hour of conference; there is held a discourse on modesty; the superior of the convent proves, that a boarder should never look at a man. The clock strikes nine; the dancing-master is in the parlour. Mind your steps, he says to his scholar, hold up your head, and always look at your partner. Now which of these is she to believe? the dancing-master or the mistress of the convent? The scholar does not know; and therefore acquires neither the grace the first would give her, nor the reserve that is preached to her by the other. Now whence do these contraditions arise, but from the contradictory desires of the parents, who would have their daughter at once agreeable and reserved, join the prudery of the cloister to the graces of the theatre? That is, they would conciliate irreconcilables*.

The Turkish education is, perhaps, the only one that is consistent with what is required of women in their own country (25).

The principles of education will be variable and in-

* A girl is required to be sincere and ingenuous. A husband is provided for her; she does not like him; she declares it freely; it is taken amiss. The parents, therefore, would have her true or false, according as it is their interest that she should be the one or the other.

determinate

Cotradictory precepts inculcated in youth.

determinate so long as they do not regard one certain point. What point is that? The greatest public utility; that is, the greatest pleasure, and the greatest happiness, of the largest number of citizens.

Do parents lose this point of view? They wander here and there in the paths of instruction. Fashion is their only guide. They know that to make their daughter a musician they must pay a music-master, but they do not know that to give her just ideas of virtue they must in like manner pay a master of morality.

When a mother undertakes the education of her daughter, she tells her in the morning, while putting on the rouge, that beauty is nothing; that virtue and talents are all *. At that moment company enters to the mother's toilet; every one praises the young lady's beauty, but not once a twelvemonth a word is said about her talents and virtue †. The only recompence moreover that is promised to her application and her virtue, is the ornaments of dress, and yet they would

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* Do they persuade a girl that without talents she will never get a husband? To-morrow she hears that the most stupid of her companions has made an excellent match, because she had a large fortune, and that without a fortune no one can be married.

† If they commonly praise nothing but beauty in a daughter, it is because beauty is really the most interesting and desirable quality in her we visit, and to whom we are neither husband nor friend; and with women the men are always on a visit.

have

have the young girl be indifferent to her beauty. Into what confusion must her ideas be thrown by such conduct!

The education of a youth is not more consistent; the first duty prescribed him is the observance of the laws; the second, their violation, when he is offended: in case of an insult, he is to fight, under pain of being dishonoured. Do they prove to him, that it is by services rendered his country, he will obtain the consideration of this world, and the felicity of the next; what models do they propose for his imitation? A monk, a fanatical and slothful dervise, whose intolerance has filled empires with trouble and desolation.

A father recommends to his son fidelity to his promise. A theologian then comes and tells the young man, that we are not bound to keep our promise to the enemies of God; for which reason Louis XIV. revoked the edict of Nantz given by his ancestors; that the pope has decided this question, by declaring every treaty made between Catholic princes and heretics to be void, and by giving the former the power of violating those treaties whenever they have sufficient strength.

A preacher proves in the pulpit, that the God of the Christians is the God of truth; that it is by their hatred to falsehood his worshippers are known (26). He descends from the pulpit, and then owns, that it is quite prudent to observe certain precautions (27); that he

Contradictory precepts inculcated in youth.

he himself in praising the truth, takes great care how he speaks it (28). In fact, the man who should write the true history of his times, in a Catholic country, would set all these worshippers of the God of truth against him (29). In such a country, a man to guard himself from persecution, must either be dumb, a fool, or a liar.

Suppose a preceptor, by force of application, should inspire his pupil with candour and humanity; his spiritual director enters, and tells him that we may pardon mankind their vices, but not their errors; that in the latter case indulgence is a crime, and that every one who does not think as he does should be burned.

Such is the ignorance and contradiction of a theologian, that he declaims against the passions at the very moment he would excite emulation in his pupil. He then forgets that emulation is a passion, and a very strong passion too if we judge by its effects.

In every part of education, therefore, there is contradiction. What is the cause? An ignorance of the true principles of this science; they have nothing but confused ideas about it. Mankind should be enlightened; the priest opposes it. Does the truth dawn a moment upon them? Its rays are absorbed in the darkness of scholastics. Error and crime both search for obscurity, the one in words (30), the other in the night. Let not, however, all the contradictions of our education be charged to theology; there are some also that arise from the vices of government. How

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Contradictory precepts inculcated in youth.

will you persuade a youth to be faithful to society, and to keep the secret of another, when even in England, the government, under a most frivolous pretext, opens the letters of private persons and betrays the public confidence? How can you flatter yourself with an expectation of inspiring him with a horror of spies and informers, when he sees them honoured, rewarded, and pensioned.

When a young man comes from the college, and mixes with the world, he is expected to render himself agreeable and constantly preserve his chastity! At the period that the passion of love is most sensibly felt, must a young man be indifferent to women, and live in the midst of them without desire *? Can parental stupidity imagine that when government builds a theatre for operas, and custom sets it open to young men, that, fond of their virginity, they will always behold with an eye of indifference, a spectacle in which the endearments, the transports, and magical power of

* If they would really damp the desires of love in a young man, what should they do? Institute violent exercises, and inspire youth with a taste for them. Exercise is in this case the most efficacious lecture. The more we perspire, the more of the animal spirits we exhaust, the less vigour remains for love. The coldness and indifference of the savages of Canada, proceeds from the fatigue and inanition produced by their long and wearisome huntings.

love,

love, are painted in the most brilliant colours, and enter their minds by all the organs of the senses *.

I should never have done if I would make a catalogue of all the contradictions in the European education, and especially in that of the Papists. In the thick fog of errors, how shall we discover the path of virtue? The Catholic, therefore, frequently wanders from it. So that without fixed principles in this matter, it is to his situation, to books, to friends, and to the mistresses that chance has given him, that he owes his virtues or vices. But is there any method of rendering the education of men more independent of chance? and if there be, how is it to be attained?

*Teach nothing but the truth.* Error is continually at variance with itself: the truth never.

Do not abandon the education of the people to two powers, who having two opposite interests, constantly teach two contradictory moralities (31).

By what fatality, it will be said, have almost all nations confided to the priesthood the moral instruc-

* Let it not be imagined, from what is here said, that I am for destroying the opera, or the drama. I only mean to condemn the contradiction in our customs and precepts. I am neither an enemy to the theatre, nor in this matter of the opinion of M. Rousseau. The theatres are incontestibly pleasing. Now there is no pleasure that in the hands of a wise government may not, by being made the recompence of virtue, become its productive principle.

tion of their youth! What is the moral of Papists? A medly of superstitions. However there is nothing which the sacerdotal power cannot execute by the aid of superstition. For by that it robs the magistrates of their authority, and kings of their legitimate power: it is by that it subdues the people, and acquires a power over them which is frequently superior to the laws; and finally, by that it corrupts the very principles of morality. What remedy is there for this evil? There is but one. This science must be entirely reformed. A new spirit must preside over the formation of its new principles, and every part of it must be directed to the public welfare.

It is time that under the title of the holy ministers of morality, the magistrates should found it on principles that are simple, clear, and consistent with the general prosperity, and of which all the inhabitants may form ideas equally just and precise. But will the simplicity and uniformity of these principles agree with the different passions of men?

Their desires may be different, but their manner of regarding objects is essentially the same. They see well and do ill. Every one being born with a just discernment discovers the truth, when it is presented to him in a clear light. With regard to youth, they have more avidity for it, as they are less accustomed to break it, and have less interest to see objects different from what they really are. The minds of young people cannot be drawn from the truth without force.

To produce this effect, all the patience and all the art of modern education are required; and even then they see by fits the light of natural reason, and the falsity of those opinions with which their memories are charged. Why then do they not efface those, and substitute in their place new ideas? Such a change of ideas requires time and pains, and is too difficult a task for the greatest part of mankind, who frequently descend to the grave before they have acquired clear and precise ideas of virtue.

When will they have just ideas? When the religious system shall coincide with the national prosperity: when religions, the habitual instruments of sacerdotal ambition, shall become the felicity of the public. Is it possible to conceive such a religion? The examination of this question deserves the attention of the sagacious part of mankind. I shall therefore, by the way, take a view of the false religions.

## CHAP. XI.

### OF FALSE RELIGIONS.

"Every religion," says Hobbes, "founded on the "fear of an invisible power, is a tale, that, avowed "by a nation, bears the name of religion, and disa-

"vowed

All religions may be considered political institutions.

"vowed by the same nation, bears the name of super-"stition." The nine incarnations of Vistnou are religion in the Indies, and tales at Nuremberg.

I shall not make use of the authority of this definition to deny the truth of religion. If I believe my nurse and my tutor, every other religion is false, mine alone is the true *. But is it acknowledged for such by the universe? No: the earth still groans with the multitude of temples consecrated to error. There is no one that is not the religion of some country.

The histories of Numa, Zoroaster, Mahomet, and so many other founders of modern worship, teach us that all religions may be considered as political institutions, which have a great influence on the happiness of nations. I therefore suppose, as the human mind still produces, from time to time, new religions, that it is a matter of importance, in order to render them the least detrimental possible, to point out the plan that should be followed in their formation.

All religions are false, except the Christian: but I do not confound that with Popery.

* Perhaps this assertion will appear absurd. This absurdity, however, is common to all men. The ridicule in me, as in them, is the effect of pride. If each one thinks his religion the best, it is because each one says to himself: *They who do not think as I do, are wrong.* I therefore express myself in the same manner as others.

Popery is of human institution.

# CHAP. XII.

## POPERY IS OF HUMAN INSTITUTION.

POPERY in the eyes of a man of sense is nothing more than mere idolatry (32). The Romish church without doubt regarded it as no other than a human institution, when, it made of that religion a scandalous use, an instrument of its avarice and ambition, that served to promote the criminal projects of the popes, and sanction their avidity and pride. But these imputations, say the papists, are calumnies.

To prove them to be true, I ask if it be probable that the heads of the monastic orders regarded their religion as divine, when to enrich themselves and their convents, they forbade the monks to inter any one in holy ground who died without making them a bequest. If they were themselves the dupes of a doctrine publicly professed, when they made themselves proprietors (33) of goods, that in quality of stewards for the poor, they ought to have divided among them? If the popes thought they really practised justice and humility, when they declared themselves the distributors of the kingdoms of America, over which they had no sort of right? When by a line of demarka-

tion

tion, they divided that part of the world (34) between the Spaniards and Portuguese? Lastly, when they pretended to reign over princes, direct them in temporal matters, and be the arbitrary disposers of their crowns? O papists! examine what has been the conduct of your church in all ages. Has it sought to entertain a Roman garrison in every kingdom, and to attach a great number of men to its interest? (it is the practice of every ambitious sect.) It has instituted a great number of religious orders; erected and peopled a great number of monasteries; and lastly has had the artifice to quarter this ecclesiastical militia in the countries where it was established.

The same motive that made it desire the multiplication of the secular clergy, has multiplied the sacraments: and the people, in order to receive them, were obliged to augment the number of their priests. They soon equalled that of the grass-hoppers of Egypt. Like them they devoured the harvests; these priests, secular and regular, being maintained at the expence of the catholic nations. To bind these priests more closely to its interest, and to enjoy their affection without a rival, the church obliged them to live a life of celibacy, without wives and without children; but otherwise in a state of ease and luxury, that made their condition continually more pleasing to them. This was not all; the Romish church, still farther to increase its riches and power, endeavoured, in the

name of St. Peter, or some other, to raise contributions in every kingdom. By this method, it in effect opened a bank between earth and heaven, and under the name of indulgences, received ready money for bills drawn on heaven and payable to order.

Now, as we have seen in every age the sacerdotal character sacrifice virtue to the lust of wealth and power: when we read the history of the popes, and see their policy, their ambition, their manners, in a word their whole conduct, and find it so different from that prescribed by the gospel, how can we imagine that the chiefs of this religion have had any other design than to get possession of all the power and wealth of the earth (85)?

After examining the manners and conduct of the monks, the clergy, and pontiffs, a protestant may, I think, show, for the justification of his belief, and the advantage of nations, that Popery was never any thing more than a human institution. But why have religions been hitherto merely local? Is it not possible to conceive one that may become universal?

CHAP

# CHAP. XIII.

## OF AN UNIVERSAL RELIGION.

An universal religion cannot be founded except on principles that are eternal and invariable, that are drawn from the nature of men and things, and that, like the propositions of geometry, are capable of the most rigorous demonstration. Are there such principles, and can they be equally adapted to all nations? Yes, doubtless: or if they vary, it will be only in some of their applications to those different countries where chance has placed the different nations.

But among the principles or laws proper for all societies, which is the first and most sacred? That which secures to every one his property, his life, and his liberty.

When a man is an uncertain proprietor of his land, he will not till his field, he will not cultivate his orchard: the nation soon becomes ravaged and desolated by famine. Is a man the uncertain proprietor of his life and liberty? He that is in continual fear, is without spirit and without industry: solely concerned for his personal preservation, and wrapt up in himself, he does not regard what passes without him: he does not

not study the science of man, nor remark his desires and his passions. It is, however, from this preliminary knowledge that the laws most conformable to the public prosperity are to be deduced.

By what fatality have laws so necessary to society, remained unknown, even to the present day? Why has not heaven hitherto revealed them? Heaven, I answer, requires that man by his reason should co-operate in his own happiness, and that of the numerous societies of the earth (30); and that the master-piece of an excellent legislation should be, like that of other sciences, the product of genius and experience.

God has said to man, I have created thee, I have given thee sensations, memory, and consequently reason. It is my will that thy reason, sharpened at first by want, and afterwards enlightened by experience, shall provide thee sustenance, teach thee to cultivate the land, to improve the instruments of labour, of agriculture, in a word, of all the sciences of the first necessity. It is also my will, that by cultivating this same reason, thou mayst come to a knowledge of my moral will, that is, of thy duties toward society, of the means of maintaining order, and lastly of the knowledge of the best legislation possible.

This is the only natural religion to which I would have mankind elevate their minds, that only which can become universal, that which is alone worthy of God, which is marked with his seal, and that of the truth. All others must bear the impression of man,

The priests necessarily hostile to such a religion.

of fraud and falsehood*. The will of God, just and good, is that the children of the earth should be happy, and enjoy every pleasure compatible with the public welfare.

Such is the true worship, that which philosophy should reveal to the world. No other saints would belong to such a religion than the benefactors of humanity; such as Lycurgus, Solon, Sidney, the inventors of some useful art, some pleasure that is new, but conformable to the general interest: none would be rejected as reprobate, but the enemies of society, and the gloomy adversaries of pleasure.

Will the priests † one day become the apostles of such a religion? Their interest forbids it. The clouds that hover over the principles of morality and legislation (which essentially are the same science) have been brought thither by their policy. It is on the ruins of the greatest part of religions that sound morality must be founded. Would to God that the priests, susceptible of a noble ambition, had sought in the consti-

* This is evidently to be understood of mere natural religion, and has nothing to do with that which is revealed; for the question here is not, whether the revealed religion be true or false; but how a natural religion, that would be universally useful, might be established. T.

† The author means the Romish priests, to whom it is plain he every where refers. T.

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Glorious distinction which priests might attain.

tuent principles of man, the invariable laws by which nature and heaven directs that the happiness of societies be established! Would to God that the religious system may become the palladium of public felicity! It is to the priests that these cares should be confided. They would then enjoy a grandeur and glory founded on public gratitude. They might then say to themselves each day of their lives, it is by us that mankind are happy. Such a grandeur, such a lasting happiness appeared to them mean and despicable. You might, O ministers of the altar! become the idols of intelligent and virtuous men! you have chosen rather to command bigots and slaves; you have rendered yourselves odious to good citizens, by becoming the plague of nations, the instruments of their unhappiness, and the destroyers of true morality.

Morality founded on true principles is the only true natural religion. However, if there should be men whose insatiate credulity (37) cannot be satisfied without a mysterious religion; let the friends of the marvellous search out among the religions of that sort, one whose establishment will be least detrimental to society.

CHAP.

# CHAP. XIV.

## OF THE CONDITIONS, WITHOUT WHICH A RELIGION IS DESTRUCTIVE TO NATIONAL FELICITY.

An intolerant religion, and one whose worship requires a great expence, is undoubtedly a prejudicial religion. Its intolerance must, in process of time, depopulate the nation, and the sumptuous worship exhaust its wealth (38). There are Roman Catholic countries were they reckon near fifteen thousand convents, twelve thousand priories, fifteen thousand chapels, thirteen hundred abbeys, ninety thousand priests employed in serving forty-five thousand parishes, and besides all these an infinite number of abbés, teachers, and ecclesiastics of every kind, amounting in the whole, to at least three hundred thousand men, whose cost* would maintain a formidable army and marine.

* In every country containing 300,000 monks, curates, priests, canons, bishops, &c. they must cost the state, in lodging, cloathing, feeding, &c. one with another, half-a-crown per day. Now, to support this, what prodigious sums must the priesthood raise on the nation, in rents, tenths, pensions, imposts for masses, repairs of churches and chapels, parochial and conventual treasu-

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Expensiveness of the Catholic religion.

A religion thus expensive to a state (39) cannot long be the religion of an enlightened and well governed

ries, seats in churches, offerings, marriages, baptisms, burials, charities, dispensations, missions, &c.

The tenths alone that the clergy draw from the cultivated lands of a country, are nearly equal to what is received by all its proprietors. In France the arpent * of cultivated land, let at five shillings and six-pence, or six shillings, yields about twenty or twenty-two minots of corn of three bushels each. The priest for his tenth takes two; the price of these two minots, or six bushels, may be, one year with another, eight or nine shillings. The priest moreover takes as much straw as may amount to five shillings; besides his tenth of oats and their straw amounting to twenty pence or two shillings: total fifteen shillings that the priest takes in the three years for the same land, that yields the proprietor in the same time sixteen or eighteen shillings, out of which he is to pay the tenth, support his farm, make good the deficiencies of unlet land, and loss by farmers, &c.

From this calculation it is easy to judge of the immense riches of the clergy; suppose we reduce the number to 100,000? Their maintenance will then amount to 25,000*l.* sterling per day, and consequently to nine millions one hundred and twenty-five thousand pounds per annum. Now what a fleet and army might be maintained with this sum? A wise government, therefore, cannot be desirous of supporting a religion that is so expensive and burthensome to the subject. In Austria, Spain, and Bavaria, and perhaps, even in France, the priests, (deduction being made for interest paid to annuitants) are richer than the sovereign.

* The arpent contains one hundred perches square, of eighteen feet each. T

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Expensiveness of the Catholic religion.

nation (40). The people that submit to it will labour only to maintain the ease and luxury of the priesthood; each of its inhabitants will be nothing more than a slave to the sacerdotal power.

In order to be good, therefore, a religion should be

What remedy is there for this abuse? There is but one; and that is to diminish the number of the priests. But there are religions (and the Roman Catholic is of this sort) whose worship requires a great number. In this case the worship should be changed, or at least the number of the sacraments diminished. The fewer priests there are, the fewer funds will be necessary for their maintenance. But these funds are sacred. Why? Is it because they are in part usurped from the poor? The clergy are only the depositaries. Therefore no taxes should be levied on these funds, but such as are absolutely necessary for government. I would observe further, that the temporal power being expressly appointed to watch over the temporal happiness of the people, it has a right to the administration of such legacies as are left to the poor, and to take into its own hands the management of all the funds of which the monks have defrauded them. But what use shall be made of them? Apply them to the actual support of the wretched; either by charities or diminution of taxes, or by the purchase of small possessions, which distributed among those whom poverty has deprived of their property, will, by making them proprietors, render them citizens *.

* These long notes will not perhaps afford much entertainment to an Englishman. They should however afford him a sensible pleasure, when he reflects how much happier the inhabitants of this country now are, than their ancestors were a very few centuries past. T.

tolerant

tolerant and little expensive (41). Its clergy should have no authority over the people. A dread of the priest debases the mind and the soul: makes the one brutish and the other servile. Must the ministers of the altar be always armed with the sword? Can the barbarities committed by their intolerance ever be forgotten? The earth is yet drenched with the blood it has spilt! Civil toleration alone is not sufficient to secure the peace of nations: the ecclesiastic must concur in the same intention. Every dogma is the seed of discord and injustice that is sown among men. Which is the truly tolerant religion? That which like the pagan has no dogma, or which may be reduced, like that of the philosophers, to a sound and elevated morality; which will, doubtless be one day the religion of the universe.

It is requisite, moreover, that a religion be gentle and humane:

That its ceremonies contain nothing gloomy or severe:

That it constantly present spectacles that are pompous, and festivals that are pleasing (42):

That its worship excite the passions, but such passions only as tend to the public utility; the religion that stifles them produces Talapoins, Bonzes, and Brahmins; but never heroes, illustrious men, and noble citizens.

The religion that is joyful, supposes a noble confidence

fidence in the goodness of the Supreme Being. Why would you have him resemble an Eastern tyrant? Why make him punish slight faults with eternal torment? Why thus put the name of the Divinity at the bottom of the portrait of the devil? Why oppress the soul with a load of fear, break its springs, and transform the worshipper of Jesus, into a vile pusillanimous slave? It is the malignant who paint a milignant God. What is their devotion? A veil for their crimes.

A religion departs from its political purpose, when the man who is just, humane toward his brethren, and distinguished for his talents and his virtues, is not assured of the favour of heaven: when a momentary desire, a burst of passion, or omission of a mass, can deprive him of it for ever.

Let not the rewards of heaven be made the price of trifling religious operations, which convey a diminutive idea of the Eternal, and false conceptions of virtue; its rewards should never be assigned to fasting, hair-cloth, a blind submission, and self-castigation.

The man who places these operations among the virtues, might as well include in the number leaping, dancing, and tumbling on the rope. What is it to the public whether a young fellow flog himself or take a perilous leap?

As the fever was formerly deified, why not deify the public good? Why has not this divinity his worship, his temple, and his priests; (43) and lastly, why make

Humility not to be considered a national virtue.

a virtue of self-denial? Humanity is in man the only virtue truly sublime: it is the principal, and perhaps the only one with which religion ought to inspire mankind, as it includes almost all others.

Let humility be held in veneration by a convent: it favours the meanness and idleness of a monastic life (44). But ought this humility to be the virtue of a people? No: A noble pride has ever been that of a renowned nation. It was the spirit of contempt, with which the Greeks and Romans regarded the slavish nations; it was a just and lofty opinion of their own courage and force, that, concurring with their laws, enabled them to subdue the universe*. Pride, it will be said, attaches a man to the earth: so much the better; pride is therefore useful. Let religion, far from oppo-

* That the Romans owed much of their exaltation to this spirit is very certain, but it is not so certain that they made a right use of it, or at least did not carry it to an excess; for as Lord Bolingbroke observes, in his Letters on the Study of History, when speaking of the Roman nation, during the career of their conquests, when they had not yet learned the lesson of moderation: "An insatiable thirst of military fame, an unconfined ambition of extending "their empire, an extravagant confidence in their own knowledge "and force, an habit of contempt of their enemies, and an impetuous, overbearing spirit, with which they pursued all their enterprizes, composed at that time the distinguishing character of a "Roman; and their sages had not then learned, that virtues in "excess degenerate into vices." T

sing

sing, encrease in man an attachment to things terrestrial; let every citizen be employed in promoting the prosperity, the glory and power of his country; and let religion be the panegyrist of every action that promotes the welfare of the majority, sanctify all useful establishments, and never destroy them. May the interest of the spiritual and temporal powers be for ever one and the same; may these two powers be reunited, as at Rome, in the hands of the magistrates (45): may the voice of heaven be henceforth that of the public good: and may the oracles of God confirm every law that is advantageous to the people!

## CHAP. XV.

### AMONG THE FALSE RELIGIONS, WHICH HAVE BEEN LEAST DETRIMENTAL TO THE HAPPINESS OF SOCIETY?

The first I shall mention is that of the Pagans: but at the time of its institution, this pretended religion was nothing more than the allegorical system of nature. Saturn was Time, Ceres, Matter; and Jupiter the generating Spirit (46). All the fables of mythology were mere emblems of certain principles of nature. When we consider it as a religious system, was it so absurd to

Principles of the Pagan religion.

adore, under various names, the different attributes of the Divinity * ?

In the temples of Minerva, of Venus, Mars, Apollo, and Fortune, whom did they adore? Jupiter, by turns considered as wise, beautiful, powerful, enlightening and fertilising the universe. Is it more rational to erect, under the names of St. Eustache, St. Martin, or St. Roch, temples to the Supreme Being? But the Pagans knelt before statues of wood or stone. The Catholics do the same; and if we may judge by external appearances, they frequently express more veneration for their saints than for the Eternal.

I am willing to allow moreover that the Pagan religion was the most absurd. It is wrong for a religion to be absurd: its absurdity may have mischievous consequences. This fault, however, is not of the first magnitude; and if its principles be not entirely opposite to the public good, if its maxims may be made agreeable to the laws, and the general utility, it is even the least detrimental of all others. Such was the Pagan religion. It never opposed the projects of a patriotic legislature. It was without dogmas, and consequently humane and tolerant. There could be no dispute, no war among its sectaries that the slightest attention of the magistrates would not prevent. Its

* We are astonished at the absurdity of the Pagan religion: posterity will one day be far more astonished at the religion of the Papists.

worship.

worship moreover did not require a great number of priests, and therefore was not necessarily a charge to the state.

Their Lares or domestic gods, sufficed for the daily worship of individuals. Some temples erected in large cities, some colleges of priests, some pompous festivals, were sufficient for their rational devotion. These festivals, in the vacation from rural labours, gave the inhabitants an opportunity to visit the cities, and became thereby a season of pleasure. Though these feasts were magnificent, they were rare, and consequently but little expensive. The Pagan religion had not therefore any of the inconveniencies of Popery.

This religion of the senses was moreover the most proper for mankind, the best adapted to produce those strong impressions that it is necessary for the legislature sometimes to excite in the people. The imagination being thereby continually kept in action, nature was held in entire subjection to the empire of Poesy, which enlivened and invigorated every part of the universe. The summits of the mountains, the wide extended plains, the impenetrable forests, the sources, of the rivers, and the depths of the seas, were peopled by the Oreades, the Fauns, the Napæ, the Hamadryades, the Tritons, and Nereides. The gods and goddesses lived in society with mortals, took a part in their feasts, their wars, and their amours; Neptune supped with the king of Ethiopia. The Nymphs and Heroes sat down among the Gods. Latona had her altars.

Passions encouraged by the Pagan religion.

The deified Hercules espoused Hebe. These celebrated heroes inhabited the fields and the groves of Elysium. Those fields, since adorned by the ardent imagination of the prophet, who transported thither the Houris, were the abode of various and illustrious men of every sort. It was there that Achilles, Patroclus, Ajax, Agamemnon, and all those heroes that fought under the walls of Troy, were still employed in military exercises; it was there that Pindar and Homer still celebrated the Olympic games, and the exploits of the Greeks.

The sort of exercise and song that had been the occupation of the heroes and poets on the earth; in a word, all the tastes they had contracted, accompanied them in the infernal regions. Their death was properly no other than a prolongation of their life.

According to this religion, what must have been the most earnest desire, the most cogent interest of the Pagans? That of serving their country by their talents, their courage, their integrity, their generosity, by all their virtues. It became a matter of importance to render themselves dear to those, with whom they were to continue their existence after death. Far from extinguishing that enthusiasm which a wise legislation inspires for virtue and talents, it was by this religion more strongly excited. The ancient legislators convinced the utility of the passions, had no desire to stifle them. What sort of men would you look for among a people without desires? Merchants, captains,

soldiers, men of letters, able ministers? No: none but monks.

A people without industry, courage, riches, and science, are born the slaves of any neighbour that has boldness enough to put on their fetters. Men must have passions, and the Pagan religion did not extinguish in them the sacred and animating fire. Perhaps the Scandinavian, a little different from the Greek and Roman, led mankind to virtue by a more efficacious method. Reputation was the god of this people. It was the only divinity from whom the inhabitants expected their reward. Every one aspired to be the child of Reputation. Every one honoured the bards, as the distributors of glory, and the priests of the temple of renown *. The silence of the bards was dreadful to warriors, and even to princes. Contempt was the lot of every one that was not the child of Reputation. Flattery was then unknown to the poets. The severe and incorruptible inhabitants of a free country, they had not then debased themselves by servile eulogies. No one among them even dared to celebrate a name that the public esteem had not already consecrated. To obtain this esteem, a man must have rendered some

* The advantage of this religion over some others is inestimable; as it rewards those talents and actions only that are useful to our country; and the heaven of other religions, is the reward of fasting, solitude, castigation, and other stupid virtues that are useless to society.

service to his country. The religious and powerful desire of immortal fame, therefore, excited men to render themselves illustrious by their talents, and their virtues. What advantage must not such a religion, that was at the same time more pure than the Pagan, procure to a nation!

But is a religion of this sort to be established in a society already formed? The attachment of a people to the prevailing worship is well known, and their horror against a new religion. What method can be taken to change the received opinions?

The method is perhaps more easy than may be imagined. If in a nation reason be tolerated, it will substitute the religion of Renown in preference to all others. But if it should substitute mere Deism, what advantage will it not give to humanity *! But will the worship rendered to the Divinity, remain a long time pure? The people are groveling; superstition is their religion. The temples elevated at first to the Eternal, will soon be consecrated to his several perfections; ignorance will make of them as many gods. Be it so: and so far let the magistrate permit them to go: but arrived there, let the same magistrate, attentive to direct the progress of ignorance, and more especially of superstition, keep it always in view; let him observe

* That is, how much better is it that man should be mere Deists than Papists: not know Christianity, than make it subservient to wicked and contemptible purposes! T.

what

The characters of priest and magistrate ought to be united.

what form it assumes, and oppose the establishment of every dogma, every principle inconsistent with sound morality, that is to say, with the public utility.

Every man is jealous of his fame. If the magistrate, as at Rome, unites in his person the double office of senator and minister of the altar (47); the priest in him should be constantly subordinate to the senator, and religion constantly subordinate to the public happiness.

The abbé de St. Pierre has said, the priest cannot be really useful but in quality of an officer of morality. Now, who can better fill that noble function than the magistrate? Who better than he can show the motives of general interest, on which are founded particular laws, and the indissolubility of the bond that unites the happiness of individuals with that of the public.

What influence would not moral instruction, given by a senate, have on the minds of the people? With what respect would not the latter receive the decisions of the former? It is from the legislative body alone that we can expect a beneficent religion, one moreover that is tolerant and not expensive, and that offers no ideas of the Divinity but what are grand and solemn: that excites the soul to a love of talents and virtue; and lastly, that has not, like the legislature, any other object than the felicity of the people. Let sagacious magistrates be clothed with temporal and spiritual power, and all contradiction between religious

and patriotic precepts will disappear: all the people will adopt the same principles of morality, and will form the same idea of a science in which it is so important for all of them to be equally instructed.

Perhaps many ages will elapse before the alterations that are requisite for human happiness can be made in the false religions. What has happened to the present hour? That men have nothing but confused ideas of morality: ideas that they owe to their different situations, and to chance, which never gives to two men precisely the same series of circumstances, nor ever permits them to receive the same instructions, and acquire the same ideas. Hence I conclude, that the inequality actually perceived in the understandings of different men, cannot be considered as a proof of their unequal aptitude to acquire it.

NOTES.

# NOTES.

1. (page 4.) The science of man is the science of philosophers; to whom the politicians think themselves, in this respect, far superior. They in fact know more of the cabals of a cabinet, and in consequence conceive the highest opinion of their own abilities. If they are curious to know their merit, let them write on man, and publish their thoughts: the esteem they will be held in by the public will teach them what esteem they ought to have for themselves.

2. (ibid.) The minister knows the details of business better than the philosopher. His information in this line is more extensive: but the latter has more leisure to study the heart of man, and knows it better than the minister. They are both, by their different species of study, destined to elucidate each other. The minister who would promote the public good, should be the friend and protector of letters. Before it was forbidden at Paris to print any thing but Catechisms and Almanacs, it was to the numerous pamphlets of intelligent men, that France, they say, owed the advantage of exporting corn, which was demonstrated by men of science. The minister, who was then at the head of the finances, availed himself of their information.

3. (p. 3.) To whatever degree of perfection education may be carried, let it not be imagined, however, that all who are able to receive it may be made men of genius. By the aid of instruction an emulation may be excited among the people, they may be habituated to attention, have their hearts opened to humanity, and their minds to truth; in a word, all the people may be made, if not men of genius, at least men of understanding and sensibility. But, as I shall prove in the course of this work, this is all the improved

proved science of education can perform, and it is enough. A nation composed in general of such sort of men would be, without dispute, the first in the universe.

4. (p. 6.) At Vienna, Paris, Lisbon, and in all the catholic countries, the sale of operas, dramas, romances, and even some good books of geometry and medicine is permitted; but of every other sort, the works of superior merit, and that is regarded as such by the rest of Europe, is prohibited. Such are those of Voltaire, Marmontel, Rousseau, Montesquieu, &c. In France, the approbation of the censor, is almost always a certificate of the stupidity of an author. It announces a book without enemies, which at first will be received with approbation, because no one troubles himself about it, because it does not excite envy, nor wound any one's pride; and contains nothing but what all the world knows. The general eulogy of the moment of publication, almost always excludes that of futurity.

5. (p. 7.) The scholastic, says the English proverb, is a mere ass, that having neither the meekness of a Christian, nor the reason of a philosopher, nor the affability of a courtier, is nothing more than an object of ridicule.

6. (ibid.) What is the science of scholastics? it is to abuse words, and render their signification uncertain. It was by virtue of certain barbarous terms that the magicians formerly destroyed enchanted castles, or at least their appearance. The scholastics, heirs of the power of the ancient magicians, have, by virtue of certain unintelligible words, in like manner given the appearance of a science to the most absurd reveries. If there be a way to destroy their enchantments, it must be by obliging them to give a precise definition of the terms they use. Were they forced to annex clear ideas to their terms, the magic of their science would vanish. We should, therefore, mistrust every work where frequent use is made of the language of the schools; that in common use is almost always sufficient for those that have clear ideas. He that would trust, and not deceive mankind, should speak their language.

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7. (p. 9.) There are but few countries where the sciences of morality and politics are studied. Young people are seldom permitted to exercise their minds on subjects of this sort. The priests are unwilling they should contract a habit of reasoning. The word *rational* is now synonymous with *incredulous*. The clergy probably suspect that the arguments for faith, like the little wings of Mercury, are too weak to support it. To be a philosopher, says Mallebranche, we must see clearly; and to be true believers, we must believe blindly. Mallebranche did not perceive that he made a fool of his firm believer. In fact, wherein does a silly credulity consist? in believing without sufficient evidence. I shall here be told of the faith of Charbonnier. He was in a particular situation. He conversed with God, who gave him an inward light. Every man except this Charbonnier, who boasts of blind faith, and a belief on *hearsay*, is therefore a man puffed up with infatuation.

8. (p. 10.) Let us sometimes amuse ourselves with the paintings of ridicule. There is nothing better. Every excellent piece of this sort supposes a large share of discernment in him that drew it. What does society owe him? a tribute of gratitude and applause proportionate to the evils his ridicule has banished, by exposing this or that defect. A nation that should regard this matter as important, would be itself ridiculous. "Of what consequence "is it, says an English author, that a certain citizen is singular in his "humour: that a petit maitre is curious in his dress, or a coquet "affected in her behaviour? she may white-wash, paint, and patch "her face and lie with her gallant, without affecting my property: "the incessant flutter of a fan does not injure my constitution." A nation too much busied with the coquetry of a woman, or the foppery of a petit maitre, is evidently a frivolous nation.

9. (p. 11.) All nations have reproached the French with their frivolity. "If the French, said Mr. Saville formerly, are frivo-"lous, the Spaniards grave and superstitious, the English serious "and profound; these properties are the effects of their forms of "government. It is at Paris that the man curious in trinkets and "dress

"dress ought to fix his abode: it is at Madrid and Lisbon they "ought to reside who love to give themselves discipline, and see "their brethren burnt alive; and lastly it is at London they "should live, who would think, and exert that faculty which princi-"pally distinguishes the man from the brute. According to this "author, there are but three subjects worthy of consideration: "nature, religion, and government. Now, as the French, says he, "dare not think on these subjects, their books, insipid to men, can "afford entertainment only to women. Liberty alone enobles the "spirit of a nation, and the spirit of a nation is that of its writers. "The minds of the French are without energy. The only estima-"ble author among them that I have a regard for is Montaigne. "Few of his fellow-subjects are worthy to admire him: to feel "him we must think, and to think we must be free*."

10. (p. 26.) The Jesuits afford a striking example of the power of education. If their order has produced few men of genius in the arts or sciences; if they have had no Newton in physics, no Racine in Tragedy, no Huygens in astronomy, or Pot in chymistry; no Bacon, Locke, Voltaire, Fontaine, &c. it is not that the religious of this order never find among their scholars those who discover the greatest genius. The Jesuits moreover, from the tranquillity of their colleges, have not their studies molested by any avocations, and their manner of living is the most favourable to the acquisition of talents. Why then have they given so few illustrious men to Europe? It is because surrounded by fanatics and bigots, a Jesuit dares not think but after his superiors: it

* A great part of that universal respect which is paid to the writings of Montaigne arises, I imagine, from his unparalleled frankness. We see his inmost thoughts; and there is in the human mind such a strong relish for the truth, when it does not oppose our interest, that wherever we are sure we see it, we are sure to be pleased. Montaigne wrote whatever he thought; most authors write whatever they think will please their readers. T.

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is, moreover, because forced to apply themselves for years together to the study of the casuists and theology, that study, so repugnant to sound reason, destroys its efficacy on them. How can they preserve on the benches a just judgment! the habit of sophistry must corrupt it.

11. (ibid.) If all the Savoyards have in a manner the same character, it is because chance has placed them in situations nearly similar, and that they almost all receive nearly the same education. Why are they all travellers? because there is no living without money, and they have none at home. Why are they laborious? because they are without assistance, and without protection in the countries to which they transplant themselves; and bread is not to be had without labour. Why are they faithful and diligent? because to be employed in preference to the natives, they must surpass them in diligence and fidelity. Why, in the last place, are they all frugal? because having, like other men, an attachment to their native country, they go out beggars to return rich, and live on what they have accumulated. Suppose, therefore, we had the greatest desire to inspire a young man with the virtues of a Savoyard, which is to be done? place him in a similar situation; and let a part of his education be confided to misfortune and indigence. Want and poverty are the only instructors whose lessons are always heard, and whose counsels are always efficacious. But if the national manners will not permit him to receive such an education, what other must be substituted for it? I do not know: no other can be so certain. We should not be surprised, therefore, if he do not acquire any of the virtues we desire him to have. Who can wonder at the want of success in an education that is insufficient.

12. (p. 29.) Shakspeare never played but one part well, which was the ghost in Hamlet.

13. (ibid.) See the extract in the Dictionary of Moreri, and the extract from the Republic of Letters: Jan. 1685, "It was to "a lady to whom was given at Rouen the name of Melite, that "France

"France owes the great Corneille." It is in like manner to love that England owes the celebrated Hogarth.

14. (p. 31.) The greater part of men of genius would have it believed that their early youth announced what they should one day be: this is their foible. Would they pretend to be of a superior race to the rest of mankind? be it so. Let us not dispute this point with their vanity: we shall affront them; but let us not believe it on their mere assertion; we should deceive ourselves. Nothing is more illusory and uncertain than these first prognostics. Newton and Fontenelle were but indifferent scholars. The classes are filled with clever children, and the world with foolish men.

15. (ibid.) The life or death, the favour or disgrace of a patron, frequently determine our future state and profession. How many men of genius do we owe to accidents of this sort. Falsehood, meanness and frivolity reign in a court? do men live there without regard to truth, humanity, and posterity? Who can doubt but disgrace or oppression may be sometimes salutary to a courtier; he may recollect in exile what man owes to himself; and removed from the dissipations of a court, a habit of study and meditation may chance to produce in him the developement of the most exalted talents. *(See on this head Ld. Bolingbroke's Reflections on Exile.)*

16. (ibid.) M. Rousseau is not insensible; his very railing against women is a proof of it. Every one of them may apply to him this verse,

"Tout jusqu'à tes mepris, m'a prouvé ton amour."
All, even thy disdain, declares thy love.*

17. (p. 32.) M. Rousseau in his works has always appeared to me less solicitous to instruct than to seduce his readers. Every where the orator, and seldom the reasoner, he forgets that though it is

* It is proper to add here, that M. Rousseau has since made the greatest atonement a man can make for railing at women; that of marrying. T.

sometimes

sometimes permitted to make use of eloquence in philosophic discussions, it is only when the importance of an opinion already received is to be strongly impressed on the mind. Was it necessary, for example, to rouse the Athenians from their stupor, and arm them against Philip? It was then incumbent on Demosthenes to exert all the powers of his eloquence, but when a new opinion is to be examined, reason alone should be employed; he that is then eloquent is wrong. Does the English house of commons always pay a due attention to the different use that should be made of eloquence, and the spirit of discussion?

18. (p. 33.) M. Rousseau became acquainted at Montmorency with Marshal Luxembourg; that nobleman had an affection for him, and honoured his talents, protected him, and by that protection acquired a right to the acknowledgment of all men of letters. Let not learned men blush to extol the truly great, why should they refuse praise where it is deserved? if the people have need of instruction, the literati have need of protectors. The friendship of Marshal Luxembourg could not, it is true, protect M. Rousseau from persecution. Perhaps the influence of that nobleman was not sufficiently strong; or perhaps the protector of the good and great is not so powerful as the hypocrisy of the bad. It may be added to the praise of M. Luxembourg, that he never lavished his favours on those insects of literature who reflect disgrace on their protector.

"If great men chuse indifferently, says Lord Shaftesbury, any "subject for their bounty, and are pleased to confer their favour "on some one pretender to art, or promiscuously on such of the "tribe of writers, whose chief ability has lain in making their court "well, and obtaining to be introduced to their acquaintance. This "they think sufficient to instal them patrons of wit, and masters "of the literate order. But this method will, of any other the "least serve their interest or design. The ill placing of rewards "is a double injury to merit; and in every cause or interest, "passes for worse than mere indifference or neutrality. There

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"can be no excuse for making an ill choice. Merit in every kind "is easily discovered when sought. The public itself fails not to "give sufficient indications, and points out those genuisses which "want only countenance and encouragement to become conside- "rable. An ingenious man never starves unknown; and great "men must wink hard, or it would be impossible for them to miss "such advantageous opportunities, of shewing their generosity, and "acquiring the universal esteem, acknowledgements, and good "wishes of the ingenious and learned part of mankind."

"*Advice to an Author, Sect. I. p.* 229.

19. (p. 38.) More than half a million sterling seized in Spain on two procurators of the Jesuits at Paraguay, shows that in preaching a contempt for riches, the Jesuits have not been the dupes of their own sermons.

20. (p. 39.) Of all legends the most ridiculous are those which the monks write concerning the founders of their orders. They say, for example: "That at the sight of a fawn pursued by the "wolves, St. Omer commanded them to stop, and they immediately obeyed."

"That St. Florent having no shepherd, ordered a bear he met "by the way to feed his sheep, and the bear led them to the pas- "ture every day.

"That St. Francis greeted the birds, talked to them, and com- "manded them to hear the word of God, and the birds hearing the "discourse of St. Francis, were exceedingly glad, stretching out "their necks, and opening their beaks.

"That the same St. Francis passed eight days with a grass- "hopper; sung a whole day together with a nightingale; cured "a mad wolf, and said to him, Brother wolf, you ought to "promise me that you will not hereafter be so ravenous as you "have been; which the wolf promised by bowing his head. St. "Francis then said to him, Give me your pledge, and at the same "time held out his hand to receive it, and the wolf gently lifting "up

NOTES ON SECTION I.

"up his right paw, put it on the hand of the saint." They write also that many other saints took delight in talking with brutes.

21. (p. 41.) They certainly do not attach a clear idea to the word *passions*, when they regard them as detrimental. This is a mere dispute about words. The theologians themselves have never said that the lively passion of the love of God is a crime. They have not condemned Decius for devoting himself in the field of battle to the infernal gods. They have never reproached Pelopidas with that animated love of his country which armed him against the tyrants, and engaged him in a most perilous enterprize. Our desires are our motives, and it is the force of our desires which determines that of our virtues and vices. A man without desire, and without want, is without invention and without reason. No motive can engage him to combine or compare his ideas with each other. The more a man approaches that state of apathy, the more stupid he becomes. If the sovereigns of the East are in general so ignorant, it is because discernment is the child of desire and want. Now the Sultans feel neither the one nor the other. There is no pleasure which a simple act of their will does not procure: invention therefore is almost always useless. The only instance in which it becomes necessary, is, when desirous of the title of a conqueror, they would ravish the sceptre from some neighbouring potentate. In every other circumstance to require sagacity in a despotic prince, is to require an effect without a cause. To reckon in an arbitary government on the capacity of a monarch born to the throne, is absurd. So that without the chance of a very extraordinary education, there are few sovereigns at once absolute and intelligent. Therefore history commonly in the number of great monarchs, reckons only such as Henry IV. Frederic, Catherine II. &c. and those princes, whose education has been severe, and who have had a fortune to make, and a thousand obstacles to surmount.

22. (ibid.) A bigot may excel in geometry, and a certain sort of painting; but when we consider the present contradiction be-

tween the interest of the public, and the interest of the priest, a man cannot, without inconsistency, be at once religious and a statesman, a saint and a good citizen, that is to say, an honest man. This is a truth that will be demonstrated in the course of this work.

23. (p. 42.) It was formerly the petit maitre who knew all things without learning any thing; now it is the theologian. Ask him about the nature of animals: they are, he will say, mere machines. But by what argument does he support this assertion? has he, in quality either of sportsman or philosopher, studied the the constitution and manners of animals? No. He has brought up neither dog nor cat, not so much as a sparrow: but he is a doctor, and, from the moment he took his degree, he has thought himself, like the emperor of China, obliged by the etiquet of his rank, to answer to all that is asked him, *I know it.* The stoical sage was supposed to be versed in all arts and sciences; he was the universal scholar. The theologian is the same; he is poet, mathematician, philosopher, watch-maker, &c. That he may have all these talents I agree: but I shall not read his verses or buy his watches. Will he permit me to give him a word of advice; it is, before he talks of animals, to consult the works of M. Buffon, and three or four letters in the *Journal Etranger*, by an accurate observer and a good writer: and to forbear to attack my sentiments on this point. I have given, they say, a mind and reason to [illegible]. That is a favour I did the doctors. What was your acknowledgment, O ungrateful mortals!

24. (ibid.) The property of despotic government is to weaken the movements of the passions in man. A consumption is therefore the mortal malady of these empires and governments, and the people subject to them have not, in general, either the confidence or courage of republicans. Even the latter have not excited our admiration, but in those critical moments when their passions were in the highest effervescence. In what times did the Hollanders and the Swiss perform actions more than human? When

When animated by the two violent passions of vengeance, and a hatred of tyrants. Passions are necessary to a people; this is a truth of which every body is now convinced, except the Guardian of the Capuchins.

25. (p. 43.) The Turk supposes woman to be formed for the pleasure of man, and created to irritate his desires. Such, he says, is the evident design of nature. Therefore that in Turkey they should permit art to add to the beauty of their women, that they should even enjoin them to improve the methods of pleasing, is quite natural. What abuse can be made of beauty that is confined in a seraglio? Suppose, if you please, a country where the women are in common. In such a country, the more methods they should invent to seduce, the more they would multiply the pleasures of man. Whatever degree of perfection of this kind they might attain, we may be sure that their coquetry would have nothing contrary to the public good. All that could be then required of them, would be that they should preserve so much veneration for their beauty and their favours, as to bestow them only on men distinguished by their genius, their courage, or their probity. By this method their favours would become an encouragement to talents and virtue. But in Turkey if the women may, without inconvenience, instruct themselves in all the arts of delight, is it the same in such a country as Europe, (where they are not shut up, nor common,) where, as in France, every house is open; is it to be imagined, that by the women's multiplying the arts to please, they would much augment the happiness of their husbands? I doubt it: and till some reformation is made in the laws of matrimony, what art might add to the natural beauties of the sex, would perhaps be inconsistent with the use that the European laws permit them to make of it.

26. (p. 45.) There are men who pretend to veracity, by virtue of their calumnies; whereas nothing is more opposite to truth than slander: the one, always indulgent, is inspired by humanity; the other, always severe, is the daughter of pride, of hatred, malevo-

lence, and envy. The tone and gesture of detraction always discover its parent.

27. (p. 45.) We cannot without a crime, conceal the truth from the people and the sovereign; what man has ever been without reproach in this respect.

28. (p. 46.) If on reading the ecclesiastical history, a young Italian, shocked at the follies and villainies of the popes, should doubt their infallibility: What an impious doubt! his preceptor would exclaim. But, replies the pupil, I speak what I think; and have you not always forbidden me to lie? Yes, in ordinary cases; but in favour of the church falsehood is a duty. And what interest have you in the pope? A very great one, replies the preceptor. If the pope's infallibility be acknowledged no one can resist his will. The people must obey him implicitly. Now what consideration does not this respect for the pope reflect on all the ecclesiastical body, and consequently on me?

29. (ibid.) Whoever in writing history alters the facts, is a bad citizen. He deceives the public, and deprives it of the inestimable advantage it might receive from that history. But in what nation can we find a just historian, and a real adorer of the God of truth? is it in France, in Portugal, or in Spain? No; it is only in a free and reformed country.

30. (ibid.) Why are the theological disputes about grace interminable? Because, luckily for the disputants, neither one side nor the other have any clear ideas of what they talk about. Do they present such as are more clear in their definitions of the Divinity? Cardinal Perron, after having in a set discourse proved the existence of a God, to Henry III. said to him, "If your majesty please, I will now prove his non-existence just as clearly*."

* There is scarcely any proposition that may not be proved either true or false, in words; but this sort of proof is very different from that which enforces conviction on the mind. All the arguments which the most subtle wit can imagine, will never convince

vince a thinking man, that there is not one eternal, infinite, omnipotent, creating Power; though they may so confound his ideas that he may not be able to unravel the sophistry.

Quibbles of this kind, especially when applied to subjects of importance, are a scandalous abuse of the rational faculty, and discover an insolent contempt of the party to whom they are offered. T.

31. (p. 48.) Why do the most part of sensible people regard all religions as incompatible with sound morality? Because the priests of every religion set themselves up as the only judges of the goodness or badness of human actions; it is because they would have the decisions of theology regarded as the real code of morality. Now the priest is a man, and in that quality judges in conformity to his interest; and his interest is almost always opposite that of the public; therefore the greatest part of his judgments are unjust. Such, however, is the power of the priest over the minds of the people, that they have frequently more veneration for the sophistries of the schools, than for the sound maxims of morality. What clear ideas can the people form about them. The decisions of the church, as variable as its interests, involve them continually in confusion, obscurity, and contradiction. What does the church substitute for the true principles of justice? Ridiculous ceremonies and observances. So that Machiavel in his Discourses on Livy, attributes the excessive iniquity of the Italians to the falsehood and contradictions in the moral precepts of the Catholic religion.

32. (p. 52.) Man, says Fontenelle, has made God after his own image, and could not make him otherwise. The monks in like manner have fashioned the celestial court after those of oriental monarchs: the prince is there invisible to the greatest part of his subjects, and accessible only to his courtiers. The complaints of the people do not reach him but through the ears of his favourites. The

monks have, in like manner, environed the throne of the Monarch of the universe, by those whom they call saints, and would not have the celestial favours obtained but by the intercession of these saints. But what must be done to render them propitious? The priests assembled for this purpose decide, that the images of the saints in wood, sculptured or unsculptured, should be placed in the churches, and that the people should kneel before them, as before the Almighty; that the external signs of adoration should be the same for the Eternal and for his favourites; in short, that honoured by the Christians, as the Penates and the Fetiches by the Pagans and Savages, St. Nicholas in Russia, for example, and St. Januarius at Naple, should be treated with greater respect than God himself. It is on these facts that are founded the accusations brought against the Greek and Latin churches. It is to the last especially, that we owe the re-establishment of Fetichism. Thus France has a national Fetiche in St. Denis, and a Fetiche of its capital in St. Genevieve; and there is no community, nor even inhabitant, that has not his particular Fetiche under the name of Peter, Claud, Martin, &c.

33. (p. 52.) There are no frauds, falsehoods, tricks, breaches of confidence, in short, no methods more base and villainous than those which the priests have employed to encrease their wealth. The Capitularies collected by Baluze, vol. ii. inform us by what means the clergy of France formerly acquired their tenth. "They produced a letter, which they said came down from heaven, "and was written by Jesus Christ; in which our Saviour threatened "the Pagans, the Sorcerers, and those who did not pay the tenth, "to blast their fields with sterility, and to send flying serpents into "their houses, to devour the breasts of their women." This first letter not succeeding, the priests had recourse to the devil. They produced him (see the same Capitularies, vol. i.) in an assembly of the nation, and the devil becoming at once apostle and missionary, and zealously concerned for the welfare of France, endeavoured to recall them to their duty by salutary castigations.

"Open

"Open your eyes at last, said the clergy, the devil himself was "the author of the last famine; it was he that devoured the corn "in the ear: dread his fury. He has declared, in the midst of "the fields, with dreadful howlings, that he will inflict the most "cruel punishment on those hardened Christians who refuse the "tenth." So many impostors on the part of the clergy prove that, in the time of Charlemagne, none but the pious souls paid the tenth. If the clergy were supposed to have had a right to levy it, they would not have had recourse to God and the devil. This fact brings to my recollection another of the same sort; it is the sermon of a vicar on the same subject. "O, my "dear parishioners, said he, do not follow the example of the "wretched Cain, but much rather that of the good Abel. Cain "would never pay the tenth, nor go to mass. Abel, on the con- "trary, always paid it with the fairest and best, and never once "missed a mass." Grotius, on the subject of tenths and donations, says, "that the scruple of Tiberius in accepting such gifts, should make the monks ashamed of their rapacity."

34. (p. 53.) The popes by their ridiculous pretensions on America, have given the example of iniquity, and authorised all the acts of injustice which the Christians have there exercised.

When there was one day, an examination in the House of Commons, whether a district situated on the confines of Canada, belonged to France, one of the members rose and said, "This "question, gentlemen, is the more delicate, as the French, as well "as we, are fully persuaded that the land in question does not be- "long to the natives of the country."

35. (p. 54.) After these facts, though the papists may still boast of the great perfection to which their religion exalts the morals of mankind, they will make no proselytes. To show the pretensions of the papists, let them be asked what is the object of the science of morality? It will appear that it cannot be any thing else than the *public good*; for if we require virtues in individuals, it is because the virtues

of the members constitute the felicity of the whole body. Now it is evident that the only method to render the people at once learned, virtuous, and happy, is to secure the property of individuals by sound laws, to excite their industry, to permit them to think and communicate their thoughts. But is the popish religion the most favourable to such laws? are the inhabitants of Italy and Portugal more secure in their lives and properties than those of England? Do they enjoy a greater liberty of thought? Are their governments founded on better principles of morality, and are they less severe, and consequently more respectable? Does not experience prove on the contrary, that the Lutherans and Calvinists in Germany are better governed and more happy than the Catholics; and the protestant Cantons of Switzerland are more rich and powerful than the Catholic. The reformed religion therefore tends more directly to the happiness of the public, than the Romish, and is more favourable to morality. It therefore inspires better morals, and such as have no other tendency than to promote the felicity of the people.

36. (p. 56.) There are great, and there are small societies. The laws of the latter are simple, because their interests are clear. They are conformable to the interest of the majority, because they are made by the consent of all; they are, lastly, very exactly observed, because the happiness of each individual is connected with their observance. It is good sense that dictates the laws of small societies; it is genius that plans those of large communities.

But what can determine men to form such large communities? Chance; an ignorance of the inconveniences attending such societies, a desire to conquer, a fear of being subdued, &c.

37. (p. 58.) Shaftsbury in his Treatise on Enthusiasm, mentions a bishop, who not finding, in the Catholic catechism, enough to satiate his enormous credulity, was forced to have recourse to the tales of the fairies.

38. (p. 59.) It is with poetry as with despotism, they each of them devour the country where they are established. The most

certain

certain method of debilitating the power of England or Holland, would be to establish there the Catholic religion.

39. (p. 60.) If our religion, say the papists, be very expensive, it is because its instructions are greatly multiplied. Be it so: but what is the produce of these instructions? Are mankind the better for them? No. What is to be done to make them so? Divide the tenths of each parish among those who cultivate their lands best, and perform the most virtuous actions. This division of the tenths will produce more labourers, and more honest men, than all the sermons of the curates.

40. (p. 61.) The History of Ireland informs us, vol. i. p. 303. that it was, at a distant period, constantly exposed to the voracity of a most numerous clergy. The poets, the priests of the country, enjoyed all the advantages, immunities, and privileges of Catholic priests; and like them, were maintained at the public expence. These poets in consequence, multiplied to such a degree, that Hugh, then king of Ireland, found it necessary to discharge his subjects from such a heavy burthen. That prince loved his people, and was a man of courage; he determined, therefore, to annihilate the priests, or at least greatly diminish their number, and succeeded in the enterprize.

In Pensylvania there is no religion established by government: each one adopts that which he likes best. The priests are no charge to the state. The individuals provide them as they find it convenient, and tax themselves accordingly. The priest is there, like the merchant, maintained at the expence of the consumer. He who has no priest, and consumes no part of the commodity he deals in, pays no part of his expence. Pensylvania, therefore, is a model from which it would be proper to copy.

41. (p. 62.) Numa himself instituted but four vestals, and a very small number of priests.

42. (ibid.) There is the same difference between paganism and popery, said an Englishman, as between Albani and Calcot: the name of the former makes me recollect a pleasing picture of the birth

birth of Venus; that of the other, a grotesque painting of the temptation of St. Anthony.

43. (p. 63.) Under the reign of Numa, the Romans consecrated a temple to Fidelity; the dedication of this temple kept them for some time faithful to their treaties.

44. (p. 64.) Whoever affects such great humility, and accustoms himself early to regard life as a pilgrimage, will never be any thing better than a monk, nor ever promote the happiness of the human race.

45. (p. 65.) The union of the spiritual and temporal powers in the hands of the same arbitrary sovereign may be dangerous, it will be said; I believe it. Every arbitrary prince, in general, solely solicitous to gratify his caprice, is but little concerned for the felicity of his subjects. He will frequently make use of the spiritual power to legitimate his pleasures and his cruelties: but it will not be the same if this power be confided to the body of magistrates.

46. (ibid.) Why was Jupiter supposed to be the last of the children of Saturn? because order and generation, the successors of chaos and sterility, were, according to the Pagan philosophers, the last product of time. Why was Jupiter, in quality of generator, called the god of the air? because, said the philosophers, vegetables, fossils, minerals, animals, in a word all that exists, transpire, exhale, corrupt, and fill the air with volatile principles. These principles being heated and put in action by the solar fire, the air must then produce a new generation by the salts and spirits received from the putrefaction. The air, therefore, the only principle of generation and corruption, appeared to them as an immense ocean agitated by numerous different principles. It is in the air, according to them, that the seeds of all beings float, which, constantly ready to re-produce, wait for that purpose the moment when chance shall deposit them in a convenient matrix. The atmosphere appeared to them, to use the expression, always alive; being charged with an acid to corrupt, and with seeds to engender.

engender. It was the vast recipient of all the principles of animation. The Titans and Janus, according to the ancients, were in like manner the emblem of chaos, Venus or love, that of attraction, the productive principle of order and harmony in the universe.

47. (p. 71.) The union of the temporal and spiritual powers in the same hands, is indispensible. Nothing is done against the sacerdotal body by merely making it more humble. Who does not entirely annihilate it, suspends, not destroys its influence. A body is immortal; a favourable circumstance, such as the confidence of a prince, or a revolution in the state, is sufficient to restore its primitive power. It will then revive with a vigour the more formidable, as by being instructed in the causes of its abasement, it will be more attentive to overthrow them. The ecclesiastical body in England is at present without power, but it is not annihilated. Who then can affirm, said a certain nobleman, that it will not one day resume its original ferocity, and again cause as much blood to flow as it did formerly*. One of the greatest services that could be rendered to France, would be to apply a part of the extravagant revenues of the clergy to the liquidation of the national debt. What could the clergy object, if careful of their welfare, they were to preserve their benefices during life, and if after that they were to be alienated? Where would be the evil of bringing so large a quantity of riches again into circulation.

* Our author will be excused this wild supposition, as being a foreigner, and not sufficiently acquainted with our excellent constitution. Such an alteration in the power of the clergy, would totally destroy that equilibrium in which the essence of our liberty consists. T.

The understanding regarded as the effect of organization.

# SECTION II.

ALL MEN, COMMONLY WELL ORGANISED, HAVE AN EQUAL APTITUDE TO UNDERSTANDING.

## CHAP. I.

AS ALL OUR IDEAS PROCEED FROM THE SENSES; THE UNDERSTANDING HAS BEEN CONSEQUENTLY REGARDED AS THE EFFECT OF MORE OR LESS SENSIBILITY IN THE ORGANISATION.

WHEN we learn from Locke, that it is to the organs of the senses we owe our ideas, and consequently our understanding; and when we remark the difference in the organs and in the understandings of different men, we may conclude, in general, that the inequality of their understandings is the effect of the unequal sensibility of their organs. An opinion so probable, and so analogous to facts * must be the more generally

* It is by the aid of analogies that we sometimes make the greatest discoveries: but in what cases should we be content with

adopted

adopted, as it favours human indolence, and prevents the pain of a fruitless search.

If contrary experiments, however, prove that the superiority of understanding is not in proportion to the greater and less perfection of the senses, we must seek the explanation of this phenomenon in some other cause.

Two opinions concerning this subject divide the learned of the present age. Some maintain that, *The understanding is the effect of a certain sort of interior temperament and organisation.* But no one has, by a series of observations, yet determined the sort of organs, temperament, or nourishment that produces the understanding*. This assertion being vague and

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a proof by analogy? When it is impossible to procure any other. This sort of proof is frequently fallacious. Have we constantly seen animals generate by the coupling of the males with the females? We conclude from thence, that it is the only method by which animals can propagate. To undeceive ourselves, we should with the most accurate and scrupulous attention enclose a vine-fretter in a phial: we should divide the polypus, and prove by reiterated experiments, that there is another method by which animals can generate.

* Some physiologists, and among them M. Lausel de Magny, have said that the strongest and most courageous temperaments were the most acute. Yet no one has ever mentioned Racine, Boileau, Paschal, Hobbes, Toland, Fontenelle, &c. as strong and courageous men. Others pretended that the bilious and sanguine are at once the most ingenious, and least capable of a constant at-

destitute

destitute of proof, is then reduced to this, *The understanding is the effect of an unknown cause, or occult quality, to which is given the name of temperament or organisation.*

Quintilian, Locke, and I, say:

*The inequality in minds or understandings, is the effect of a known cause, and this cause is the difference of education.*

To prove the first of these opinions, we must show, by repeated experiments, that the superiority of the understanding does really belong to such a sort of organ or temperament. Now these proofs remain yet to be produced. Hence it follows, that if from the principles I lay down, the cause of the inequality in

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tention. But can we say, at the same time, incapable of attention, and endowed with great talents? can it be imagined, that without application, Locke and Newton had ever made their sublime discoveries?

Some again have remarked, that the cogitative and ingenious are ordinarily melancholic; but have not perceived that they took in them the effect for the cause, that the ingenious is not so, because he is melancholic, but melancholic because the habit of meditation made him so.

In the last place, many have made the understanding depend on the sensibility of the nerves: but women have very lively sensations. The sensibility of their nerves should therefore give them a great superiority over men. Are their understandings really superior? No. Besides, what clear idea can we form after all, of the greater or less sensibility of the nerves?

minds

The understanding dependent on the organization.

minds or understandings can be clearly deduced, we ought to give the preference to the latter opinion.

Now when a known cause can explain a fact, why should we have recourse to one that is unknown, to an occult quality, whose existence, always uncertain, explains nothing that we cannot account for without it?

To prove *that all men equally well organised, have an equal disposition for understanding** ; we must ascertain the principle by which it is produced : what is it?

* Mr. Locke was doubtless partly convinced of this truth, when he said, speaking of the unequal capacity of understandings, he thought he saw less difference between them, than is commonly imagined. "I think, says he, in the second page of his Education, we "may assert, that in an hundred men, there are not more than ninety, "who are what they are, good or bad, useful or pernicious to society, "but from the instruction they have received. It is on education "that depends the great difference observable among them. The "least and most imperceptible impressions received in our in-"fancy, have consequences very important, and of a long dura-"tion. It is with these first impressions, as with a river, whose "water we can easily turn, by different canals, in quite opposite "courses, so that from the insensible direction the stream receives "at its source, it takes different directions, and at last arrives at "places far distant from each other: and with the same facility, I "think, we may turn the minds of children to what direction we "please." In this passage Locke does not indeed expressly affirm, that all men equally well organised, have equal aptitude to mental capacity: but here he says, what he had been, as it were, a witness of, and what daily experience had taught him. This philosopher

All

Of the principle which produces the understanding.

All the sensations of man are material. Perhaps I have not sufficiently explained this truth in my Treatise on the Mind. What then should I here propose? To demonstrate rigorously, what, perhaps, I have there only asserted, and prove that all the operations of the mind are reducible to sensation. It is this principle,

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I had not reduced all the faculties of the mind to the capacity of sensation, which is the only principle that can resolve this question.

Quintilian, who had been for so long a time charged with the instruction of youth, had still more practical knowledge than Locke, and is more bold in his assertions. He says, Inst. Orat. lib. i. "It "is an error to think that there are few men born with the faculty "of discerning the ideas offered them, and that the greatest part "lose their time, and pains in endeavouring to conquer the innate "idleness of their minds. The greatest number, on the contrary, "appear equally well organised, to think and retain with promptitude and facility. It is a talent as natural to man, as flying is to "birds, running to horses, and ferocity to savage beasts. The life "of the soul is in its activity and industry, whence it has received "the attribute of a celestial origin. Minds that are stupid and "incapable of science, are in the order of nature to be regarded "as monsters and other extraordinary phenomena; minds of "this sort are rare. Hence I conclude, that there are great re"sources to be found in children, which are suffered to vanish "with their years. It is evident therefore that it is not of nature, but of our negligence we ought to complain."

The opinions of Quintilian and Locke, both founded on experience, and the proofs I have urged to demonstrate this truth, ought, I think, to suspend on this subject the too precipitate judgment of the reader.

that

that can alone explain to us how we owe our ideas to our senses; and at the same time that is not, however, as is proved by experience, to the extreme perfection of those senses, that we owe the greater or less extent of our understanding.

If this principle will reconcile two facts, in appearance so contradictory, I shall conclude, that the superiority of the understanding is not the produce of temperament, nor of the greater or less perfection of the senses, nor of an occult quality, but that of the well known cause, education, and in short, that instead of vague assertions so frequently repeated, we may substitute very determinate ideas.

Previous to the particular examination of this question, I think, in order to make it more clear, and to avoid all contest with the theologians, I should first distinguish between the mind, and what they call the soul.

## CHAP. II.

### OF THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE MIND AND THE SOUL.

THERE are no two words perfectly synonimous. This truth being unknown to some, and forgotten by others, has caused the words Mind and Soul to be frequently

Notions of the Parsis respecting the soul.

quently confounded. But what is the difference between them? and what is the soul? Are we to regard it after the ancients, and the first fathers of the church, as a matter extremely refined, and as the electric fire by which we are animated? Were I here to recount all the opinions of different nations, and different sects of philosophers, concerning it, they would altogether form nothing but vague, obscure, and trifling ideas. The only people that expressed themselves with sublimity on this subject, were the Parsis.* When they pronounce a funeral oration over the tomb of some great man, they cried "O earth! O, common mother "of human beings, take back what to thee appertains "of the body of this hero: let the aqueous particles "that flowed in his veins exhale into the air, and "falling in rain on the mountains, replenish the "streams, fertilise the plains, and roll back to the abyss "of the ocean whence they proceeded! Let the fire "concentered in this body rejoin the heavenly orb, the "source of light and heat! Let the air confined in his "members, burst its prison, and be dispersed by the "winds in the mundane space! And lastly thou, O "breath of life, if perchance thou art of a nature se-"parate from all others, return to the unknown being "that produced thee! or, if thou art only a mixture of "material elements, mayst thou, after being dispersed

* A people of Cambaya, in the empire of the Mogul.



"in

"in the universe, again assemble thy scattered par-
"ticles, to form another citizen as virtuous as this
"hath been!"

Such were the noble images, and sublime expressions employed by the enthusiasm of the Parsis, to express the ideas they had of the soul. Philosophy, less bold in its conjectures, dares not describe its nature, and resolve the question. Philosophy cannot advance without the staff of experience: it does indeed advance but constantly from observation to observation, *and where observation is wanting it stops.* All that philosophy knows, is, that man feels, that he has within him a principle of life, and that without the wings of theology, he cannot mount to the knowledge of this principle.

Whatever depends on observation appertains to metaphysical philosophy; all beyond belongs to theology* or scholastic metaphysics.

* Some have doubted whether the science of God or theology, be in fact a science. All science, they say, supposes a series of observations. Now what observation can be made on a Being that is invisible and incomprehensible? Theology is therefore no science. In fact, what do we understand by the word of God? The unknown cause of order and motion. Now, what can we say of an unknown cause? If we attach other ideas to the word of God, we shall fall, as Mr. Robinet has shown, into a thousand contradictions. Does the theologian contemplate the curves described by the heavenly bodies, and thence conclude, that there is a power who moves them? *Cæli enarrant gloriam Dei!*

The nature of the soul not yet ascertained.

But why has not human reason, enlightened by observation, yet given a clear definition, or to speak more

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The theologian is then nothing more than an astronomer, or natural philosopher *.

No one doubts, say the Chinese Letters, that there is in nature, *a ruling Power, though he is ignorant what it is:* but when we conjecture the nature of this unknown power, *the creation of a God is then nothing more than the deification of human ignorance.* I do not entirely agree with these Letters, though I am forced to own with them, that theology, that is to say, the science of God, or the incomprehensible, is not a separate science. What is then theology? I do not know.

* It is surely much better to be a rational astronomer, or philosopher, than a metaphysical quibbler, or atheist, for an atheist, is nothing else: one of those sublime investigators, who, as Pope says,

Nobly take the high priori road,
And reason downward till they doubt of God.

If any one should ask what was the cause of thought, I might reply the action of the soul upon the nerves of the brain. But is the soul material or immaterial? If the latter, how can immateriality act on matter; and if the former, in what manner does it act? I cannot answer these questions. I do not know in what manner gravity acts. But what of that, will any one tell me there is no gravity in nature, because I do not know how it is produced? or, because I cannot give a clear explanation of the manner in which thought is produced, that therefore I do not think at all? and with just as much reason do some men doubt, or affect to doubt, the existence of a first creating cause, because they cannot comprehend its manner of existence, that is, because they cannot comprehend what is by its nature incomprehensible. T,

properly,

properly, an adequate and minute description of the principle of life? Because that principle has still escaped the most accurate observation. With the mind it is better acquainted. We can moreover examine this principle, and think on this subject without dread of the ignorance and fanaticism, of bigots. I shall therefore here consider some of the remarkable differences between the mind and the soul.

FIRST DIFFERENCE.

The soul exists intire in the infant as well as in the adult. The infant, as well as the man, is sensible of pleasure and pain, but he has not so many ideas, nor consequently so much mind or understanding as the adult. Now if the infant have as much soul without having as much mind, the soul is not the mind*. In fact, if the soul and the mind were one and the same thing, to explain the superiority of the adult over the infant, we must admit more soul in the former, and agree that his soul has encreased with his body: a supposition absolutely gratuitous, and insignificant,

* They deny a child the power of sinning before it is seven years old. Why? because before that age it is supposed to have no just idea of good or evil. That age passed, it is reputed a sinner, because it is then supposed to have acquired adequate ideas of just and unjust. The mind or understanding is therefore regarded by the church itself as an acquisition, and consequently as quite different from the soul.

Differences between the mind and the soul.

when we distinguish the mind from the soul or principle of life.

SECOND DIFFERENCE.

The soul does not leave us till death. As long as I live I have a soul. Is it the same of the mind? no. I can lose it during my life: because, while I yet live I can lose my memory; and the mind is almost entirely the effect of that faculty. The Greeks gave the name of Mnemosyne to the Mother of the Muses, because, being attentive observers of man, they perceived that his judgment, wit, &c. were in great part the produce of his memory.*

If a man be deprived of this faculty, of what can he judge? of sensations past? No: he has forgotten them; and of sensations present, it is necessary to have at least as much memory as will give him an opportunity of comparing them together, that is, of ob

* Understanding, or intelligence is also in brutes the effect of memory. If a dog comes at my call, it is because he remembers his name. If he obey me when I pronounce these words, *Softly*; *take care*; *dont touch that*; it is because he remembers that I am strong, and that I have beaten him.

What makes animals perform so many tricks in the public spectacles? The fear of the whip; of which the look, the speech, and gesture of the master put them continually in mind. If my dog stop and look at me, it is because he would read in my eyes, whether I am pleased or angry, and consequently know if he shall approach or avoid me. My dog, therefore, owes his intelligence to his memory.

serving

serving alternately the different impressions he feels at the presence of two objects. Now, without a memory to retain impressions, how can he perceive the difference between those of this instant and those that the instant before were perceived and forgotten? There is then no comparison of ideas, no judgment, no mind, without memory. An ideot, who sits on the bench at his door, is only a man who has little or no memory. If he answer not to questions that are asked him, it is because he does not remember the ideas affixed to the words, or he forgets the first words of a sentence before he hears the last. If we consult experience, we shall find that it is to the memory (whose existence supposes the faculty of perception) that man owes his ideas and his understanding. There can be no sensations without a soul; but without a memory there can be no experience, no comparison of objects, no ideas; a man would be the same in his old age that he was in his infancy*. A man is reputed an ideot when he is ignorant; but he is only really so when his memory no longer exerts its functions†.

* If the theologians agree that the infant and the ideot cannot sin, and that they have each of them a soul, it follows that in man sin does not essentially belong to the soul.

† The famous M. Erhard, the instructor of the deaf and dumb, says in a memoir presented to the Academy of Sciences at Paris, that if the deaf and dumb have only short intervals of judgment, and reflect but little; if their minds be weak, and their reasoning instantaneous; it is because their memories are

Differences between the mind and the soul.

Now, without losing our soul, we can lose our memory; as by a fall, an apoplexy, or other accident of the like nature. The mind, therefore, differs essentially from the soul, as we can lose the one and still live, and the other is not lost but with life itself.

THIRD DIFFERENCE.

I have said, that the mind of man is composed of an assemblage of ideas. There is no mind without ideas. Is it the same with the soul? No: neither thought nor understanding is necessary to its existence. As long as man is sensible, he has a soul. It is therefore the faculty of perception that forms its essence. Deprive the soul of what does not properly belong to it, that is of the faculty of remembrance, and what faculty is left it? That of perception. It then does not even preserve a consciousness of its own existence, because that consciousness supposes a concatenation of ideas, and consequently a memory. Such is the state of the soul, when it has yet no use of the faculty of remembrance.

We may lose our memory by a blow, a fall, or a disease. Is the soul deprived of this faculty? It must then, without a miracle, or the express will of God, find itself in the same state of imbecility as it was in the human embryo. Thought, therefore, is not absolutely necessary to the existence of the soul. The

almost always stupified, and consequently their ideas and their actions are, and must be, without consistency.

soul

Differences between the mind and the soul.

soul then, is in us nothing but the faculty of perceiving, and this is the reason why, as Locke and experience prove, all our ideas come to us by the senses.

It is to my memory I owe the comparison of my ideas and my judgments, and to my soul I owe my sensations. It is therefore properly* my sensations, and not my thoughts, as Descartes asserts, that prove to me the existence of my soul. But what is the faculty of perception in man? is it immortal and immaterial? Of this human reason is ignorant, and revelation instructs us. Perhaps it will be objected, that if the soul be nothing more than the faculty of perception, its action, like that of one body striking another, is constantly necessary, and that the soul in this case must be regarded as merely passive. So Mallebranche believed†, and his system has been publicly taught.

* M. Marion, regent of philosophy in the college of Navarre, and several professors, after his example, have maintained that all the operations of the mind may be explained solely by the motion of the animal spirits, and the traces impressed on the memory. Hence it follows, that the animal spirits put in motion by exterior objects, can produce in us ideas independent of what we call the soul. The mind, therefore, according to these professors, is quite distinct from the soul.

† According to Mallebranche, it is God that manifests himself to our understanding: it is to him we owe all our ideas. Mallebranche, therefore, did not believe that the soul could produce them of itself: he consequently thought it merely passive. The Catholic church hath not condemned this doctrine.

Differences between the mind and the soul.

If the theologians of the present day condemn it, they will fall into a contradiction with themselves that will certainly somewhat embarrass them. For the rest, as men are born without ideas of virtue, vice, &c. whatever system the theologians adopt, they will never prove that thought is the essence of the soul; and that the soul, or the faculty of sensation, cannot exist in us, without its being put in action, that is to say, without our having either ideas or sensations.

The organ exists, when it does not sound. Man is in the same state with the organ, when in his mother's womb; or when overcome with labour, and not troubled by dreams, he is buried in a profound sleep. If all our ideas moreover, can be ranged under some of the classes of our knowledge, and we can live without having any ideas of mathematics, physics, morality, mechanics, &c. it is then not metaphysically impossible to have a soul without having any ideas.

The savages have little knowledge, they have nevertheless souls. There are some of them who have no ideas of justice, nor even words to express that idea. They say, that a man deaf and dumb, having suddenly acquired his hearing and speech, confessed, that before his cure, he had no idea of God or of death.

The king of Prussia, prince Henry, Hume, Voltaire, &c. have no more soul than Bertier, Lignac, Seguy, Gauchat, &c. The former, however, have minds as superior to the latter, as they have to monkeys, and other animals that are exhibited in public shews.

Pompignan,

Differences between the mind and the soul.

Pompignan, Chaumeix, Caveirac*, &c. have certainly very little understanding, however, we always say of them, he speaks, he writes, and even he has a soul. Now, if having very little understanding, a man has not the less soul, ideas cannot make any part of it; they are not essential to its being. The soul, therefore, may exist independently of all ideas, and of all understanding.

Let us here recapitulate the most remarkable differences between the soul and the mind.

The first is, that we are born with a perfect soul, but not with a perfect mind.

The second, that we can lose our mind, or understanding, while we yet live, but that we cannot lose the soul but with life itself.

The third, that thought is not necessary to the existence of the soul.

Such was doubtless the opinion of the theologians, when they maintained, after Aristotle, that it was to the senses the soul owed its ideas. Let it not be imagined, however, that the mind can be considered as entirely independent of the soul. Without the faculty of sensation, memory, the productive power of the

* The names of these despicable mortals are not known in Germany, or in any part of Europe, except by some of M. Voltaire's minor pieces. But for him their existence would never have been known.

mind

The mind the effect of the soul.

mind, would be without the functions, it would be of no effect *. The existence of our ideas and our mind supposes that of the faculty of sensation. This faculty is the soul itself: whence I conclude, that if the soul be not the mind, the mind is the effect of the soul, or the faculty of sensation †.

* The Treatise on the Mind, says, that memory is nothing more than a continued, but weakened sensation. In fact, the memory is nothing more than the effect of the faculty of sensation.

† I shall be asked, perhaps, what is the faculty of sensation, and what produces this phenomenon in us? The following is the opinion of a celebrated English chymist, on the soul of animals: "We find, says he, in bodies, two sorts of properties, the existence of one of which is permanent and unalterable; such are impenetrability, gravity, mobility, &c. These qualities appertain "to physics in general."

There are in the same bodies other properties, whose transient and fugitive existence is by turns produced and destroyed by certain combinations, analyses, or motions in their interior parts. These sorts of properties form the different branches of natural history, chymistry, &c. and belong to particular parts of physics.

Iron, for example, is a composition of phlogiston and a particular earth. In this compound state it is subject to the attractive power of the magnet. When this iron is decomposed, that property vanishes: the magnet has no influence over a ferruginous earth deprived of its phlogiston.

When a metal is combined with another substance, as a vitriolic acid, this union destroys in like manner in iron the property of being attracted by the magnet.

Fixed alkali, and a nitrous acid have each of them separately an

CHAP.

# CHAP. III.

## OF THE OBJECTS ON WHICH THE MIND ACTS.

WHAT is nature? The assemblage of all beings. What can be the employment of the mind in the

infinite number of different qualities; but when they are united, no vestige of those qualities remains; each of them then ferments with nitre.

In the common heat of the atmosphere, a nitrous acid will disengage itself from all other bodies, to combine with a fixed alkali.

If this combination be exposed to a degree of heat, proper to put the nitre into a red fusion, and any inflammable matter be added to it, the nitrous acid will abandon the fixed alkali, to unite with the inflammable substance, and in the act of this union, arises the elastic force whose effects are so surprising in gunpowder.

All the properties of fixed alkali are destroyed, when it is combined with sand, and formed into glass, whose transparency, indissolubility, electric power, &c. are, if I may be allowed the expression, so many new creations, that are produced by this mixture, and destroyed by the decomposition of glass.

Now in the animal kingdom, why may not organisation produce in like manner that singular quality we call the faculty of sensation? All the phenomena that relate to medicine and natural history, evidently prove that this power is in animals nothing more than the result of the structure of their bodies; that this power begins with the formation of their organs, lasts as long as they subsist, and is at last destroyed by the dissolution of the same organs.

universe?

Objects on which the mind acts.

universe? That of an observer of the relations which objects have to each other, and to us: the relations that objects have to me are small in number. I am presented with a rose: its colour, its form, and smell please, or displease me. These are the relations it has to me. Every relation of this kind is reducible to the agreeable or disagreeable manner in which an object affects me. It is the conclusive observation of such relations that constitutes taste, and its rules.

With regard to the relations which objects have to each other, they are as numerous as are, for example, the different objects which I can compare to the form, the colour, and smell of my rose. The relations of this sort are immense, and their observation belongs more directly to the sciences.

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If the metaphysicians ask me, what then becomes of the *faculty of sensation in an animal?* That which becomes, I should answer them, of the quality of attracting the magnet in iron that is decomposed.

See *Treatise on the Principles of Chymistry.*

CHAP.

The mind acts by observation and comparison

# CHAP. IV.

## HOW THE MIND ACTS.

All the operations of the mind are reducible to the observing of the resemblances and differences, the agreements and disagreements that objects have among themselves and with respect to us. The justness of the mind or judgment depends on the greater or less attention with which its observations are made.

Would I know the relations certain objects have to each other? What must I do? I place before my eyes, or present to my memory two or more of these objects; and then I compare them. But what is this comparison? *It is an alternate and attentive observation of the different impressions which these objects, present, or absent, make on me* *. This observation made, I judge, that is, I make an exact report of the impressions I have received.

* If the memory, the preserver of impressions received, makes me perceive, in the absence of the objects, nearly the same sensations that they excite in me when present, it is indifferent, with regard to the question here discussed, whether the objects of which I form a judgment, be presented to my eyes, or my memory.

Am

The mind acts by observation and comparison.

Am I, for example, anxious to distinguish between two shades of the same colour, that are almost indistinguishable: I examine a long time and successively two pieces of cloth tinged with those two shades. *I compare them*, that is, *I regard them alternately*. I am very attentive to the different impressions the reflected rays of these two patterns make on my eyes, and I at last determine, that one of them is of a deeper colour than the other; that is to say, I make an exact report of the impressions I have received. Every other judgment would be false. All judgment therefore is nothing more than a *recital of the two sensations, either actually proved, or preserved in my memory**.

When I observe the relation objects have to me, I am in like manner attentive to the impressions I receive. These impressions are either agreeable or disagreeable. Now in either case what is judging? *To tell what I feel.* Am I struck on the head? Is the pain violent? The simple recital of what I feel forms my judgment.

I shall only add one word to what I have here said, which is, that with regard to the judgments formed of the relations which objects have to each other, or to us, there is a difference, which though of little importance in appearance, deserves however to be remarked.

When we are to judge of the relation which objects

* There can be no judgment without memory: as I have proved in the preceding chapter.

bear

bear to each other, we must have at least two of them before our eyes. But when we judge of the relation an object has to ourselves, it is evident, as every object can excite a sensation, that one alone is sufficient to produce a judgment.

From this observation I conclude, that every assertion concerning the relation of objects to each other, supposes a comparison of those objects; every comparison a trouble; every trouble an efficacious motive to take it. But on the contrary, when we are to observe the relation of an object to ourselves, that is to say, a sensation, that sensation, if it be lively, becomes itself the efficacious motive to excite our attention.

Every sensation of this kind, therefore, invariably produces a judgment. I shall not stop longer at this observation, but repeat, agreeably to what I have said above, that in every case to *judge*, is to *feel*.

This being settled, all the operations of the mind are reduced to mere sensations. Why then admit in man a faculty of judging distinct from the faculty of sensation. But this is the general opinion: I own it; and it even ought to be so. We say, I perceive, and I compare; there is therefore in man a faculty of judging and comparing, distinct from the faculty of sensation. This method of reasoning is sufficient to impose on the greatest part of mankind. However, to shew its fallacy, it is only necessary to fix a clear idea to the word *compare*. When this word is properly elucidated, it will be found to express no one real operation of the

mind; that the business of comparing, as I have before said, is nothing else than *rendering ourselves attentive to the different impressions excited in us by objects actually before our eyes, or present to our memory*; and consequently, that all judgment is nothing more *than the pronouncing upon sensations experienced.*

But if the judgment formed from the comparison of material objects be nothing more than mere sensations, is it the same with every other sort of judgment?

## CHAP. V.

### OF SUCH JUDGMENTS AS RESULT FROM THE COMPARISON OF IDEAS THAT ARE ABSTRACTED, COLLECTIVE, &c.

The words weakness, strength, smallness, greatness, crime, &c. do not represent any substance, that is, any body; how then can the judgments resulting from the comparison of such words, or ideas, be reduced to mere sensations? I answer, that as these words do not represent any ideas, it is impossible, so long as we do not apply them to any sensible and particular object, to form any judgment about them. But when they are applied by design, or imperceptibly, to some determinate object, then the word *great* will express a relation,

Reason for inventing words expressing abstract ideas.

relation, that is, a certain difference or resemblance observed between objects present to our sight, or to our memory. Now the judgment formed of ideas, that by this application become material, will be, as I have repeatedly said, nothing more than the pronouncing of sensations felt.

I shall be asked perhaps, from what motives men have invented and introduced these algebraical expressions, if I may be allowed the term, which till they are applied to sensible objects, have no real signification, and represent no determinate idea? I answer, that men thought they should by this method be able to communicate their ideas more easily, readily, and even more clearly. It is for this reason that they have in all languages created so many adjectives and substantives that are at once so vague * and so useful.

* The language of a polished people invariably comprehends a multitude of pronouns, conjunctions, in short, of words that being void of meaning themselves, borrow their different significations from the expressions with which they are connected, or the phrases in which they are used. The invention of most of these words is owing to the fear that men had of too much increasing the signs of their languages, and a desire of communicating their ideas more easily. If they had in fact been obliged to create as many words as there are things to which they might be applied; for example, the adjectives *white*, *strong*, *great*, as *a great cable*, *a great ox*, *a great tree*, &c. it is evident that the multiplicity of words necessary to express their ideas would have been too weighty for their memory. It appeared necessary therefore to invent such words, as representing no real idea themselves,

Vague ideas excited by certain words.

Let us take for example, among these insignificant expressions, that of the word *line*, considered in geometry as having length without breadth or thickness; in this sense it recals no idea to the mind. No such line exists in nature, nor can any idea be formed of it. What does the master design therefore by using it? Merely to induce his pupil to give all his attention to the length of a body, without considering its other dimensions.

When, for the facility of algebraical calculation, we substitute the letters A and B for fixed quantities, do these letters present any ideas? Do they express any real dimension? No. Now what is denoted in algebraical language by A and B, is expressed in common language by the words weakness, strength, smallness, greatness, &c. Those words express only a vague relation of things to each other, and do not convey any real and clear idea till the moment they are applied to a determinate object, and that object be compared with another. It is then that these words being put, if I may so say, in equation or comparison, express very precisely the relation of objects to each other. Till that moment the word greatness, for example, recals to the mind very different ideas, accord-

having only a local signification, and expressing merely the relations which objects have to each other, should however recal to the mind distinct ideas, the moment these words were connected with the objects whose relation they expressed.

ing

Vague ideas excited by certain words.

ing as it is applied to a fly or an elephant. It is the same with regard to what is called in man idea or thought. These expressions are in themselves insignificant; yet to how many errors have they given birth: how often has it been maintained in the schools, that *as thought does not belong to extension and matter*, it is evident, that the soul is spiritual. I confess I could never make any thing of this learned jargon. What in fact is the meaning of the word *thought*? Either it is void of meaning, or like the word *motion* it merely expresses a mode of a man's existence. Now nothing can be more clear, than that a mode or manner of being is not a body or has no extension. But to make of this mode a being, and even a spiritual being, nothing, in my mind, is more absurd. What again can be more vague than the word *crime*? That this collective term may convey to my mind a clear and determinate idea, I must apply it to a theft, a murder, or some such action. Men have invented words of this sort merely to communicate their ideas more easily, or at least more readily. Suppose a society was instituted into which none but honest men were to be admitted; in order to avoid the trouble of transcribing a long catalogue of the actions for which any one was to be excluded, they would say in one word, that no man guilty of a crime was to be admitted. But of what precise idea would the word crime be here the representative? Of none. This word could be solely intended to call to the mind of the society those pernicious actions of

which its members might become culpable, and to caution them to take heed to their conduct. In short, this word would be properly nothing more than a sound, and a more concise method of exciting the attention of the society.

In like manner, if we are forced to determine the punishment due to a crime, we must first form clear and precise ideas of it, and then recal to our memory, successively, the representation of the different crimes a man may commit: then examine which of those offences is most detrimental to society, and lastly, form a judgment which would be, as I have so often said, nothing more than *expressing the sensations felt at the presence of several representations of those crimes.*

Every idea whatever may therefore, in its ultimate analysis, be always reduced to material facts or sensations. Some obscurity is thrown on discussions of this kind by the vague significations of a certain number of words, and the trouble that is sometimes necessary to deduce clear ideas from them. Perhaps it is as difficult to analyze some of these expressions, and to reduce them, if I may so say, to their constituent ideas, as it is in chymistry to decompose certain bodies. However, let us but apply the method and attention necessary in this decomposition, and we shall not fail of success.

What is here said will be sufficient to convince the discerning reader, that every idea and every judgment may be reduced to a sensation. It would be therefore unne-

Interest the motive for comparing objects.

unnecessary, in order to explain the different operations of the mind, to admit a faculty of judging and comparing distinct from the faculty of sensation. But what it may be asked, is the principle or motive that makes us compare objects with each other, and gives us the necessary attention to observe their relations? Interest, which is in like manner, as I am going to shew, an effect of corporeal sensibility.

## CHAP. VI.

### WHERE THERE IS NO INTEREST THERE IS NO COMPARISON OF OBJECTS WITH EACH OTHER.

All comparison of objects with each other supposes attention, all attention a trouble, and all trouble a motive for exerting it. If there could exist a man without desire, he would not compare any objects, or pronounce any judgment; but he might still judge of the immediate impressions of objects on himself, supposing their impressions to be strong. Their strength becoming a motive to attention, would carry with it a judgment. It would not be the same if the sensation were weak; he would then have no knowledge or remembrance of the judgment it had occasioned. A man surrounded by an infinity of objects, must neces-

sarily be affected by an infinity of sensations, and consequently form an infinity of judgments; but he forms them unknown to himself. Why? Because these judgments are of the same nature with the sensations. If they make an impression that is effaced as soon as made, the judgments formed on these impressions are of the same sort; they leave no remembrance. There is in fact no man who does not, without perceiving it, make every day an infinity of reasonings, of which he is not conscious. I will take, for example, those that attend almost all the rapid motions of our bodies.

When in the dance, Vestris, makes a cabriole rather than an entrechat, when Moté in the fencing-school thrusts tierce rather than quart, if there be no effect without a cause, Vestris and Moté must be determined by reasons too rapid, if I may so say, to be perceived. So the motion I make with my hand when a body is going to strike my eye, may be reduced to nearly the same; experience tells me, that my hand can resist without pain the blow of a body that would deprive me of sight: my eyes moreover are dearer to me than my hand: I ought therefore to expose my hand to save my eyes. There is no person that would not use the same reasoning in the same situation; but this habitual reasoning is not so rapid, but that we perceive the moment we have put the hand before the eye, the action and the cause of the action. Now how many sensations are there of the nature of these habitual reasonings? How many weak sensations that do not fix our atten-

The strength or weakness of impressions depend on our situation.

tion, or produce in us either consciousness or remembrance?

There are moments when the strongest sensations are, in some measure, imperceptible. I fight, and am wounded, I continue the combat, and perceive not my wound. Why? Because the love of preservation, rage, and the motion given to my blood, render me insensible to the stroke that at another time would have fixed all my attention.

There are moments on the contrary, when we are sensible of the slightest impressions; that is, when the passions of fear, ambition, avarice, envy, &c. concentrate all our attention on an object. Am I concerned in a conspiracy? There is not a gesture, not a look that can escape the restless and suspicious eyes of my accomplices. Am I a painter? Every remarkable effect of the light strikes me. Am I a jeweller? There is not a flaw in a diamond that I do not perceive. Am I envious? There is no defect in a great character that my piercing eye does not discern. In like manner those passions that by fixing all my attention on certain objects, render me susceptible of the keenest sensations, with regard to them, make me at the same time insensible to every other sort of sensation.

If I be in love, jealous, ambitious, or discontented, and in this situation of mind traverse the magnificent palace of a monarch, in vain are the rays reflected from marbles, statues, and paintings; to awaken my attention, some new, unknown object must suddenly and forcibly strike

The strength or weakness of impressions depend on our situation.

strike my sight. Unless such an impression occur, I walk on without perceiving the sensations that strike me.

If, on the contrary, in the calm of my desires, I range through the same place, then, sensible to all the beauties of nature and art by which it is embellished, my soul being open to every impression will participate of all it receives. I shall not indeed be endowed with that keen and piercing look with which the lover, and the ambitious man behold every object that affects them. I shall not like them see what is only visible to the eyes of the passions. I shall be less acutely, but more generally sensible. Let a man of pleasure and a botanist walk by the side of a river, shaded by stately oaks, and bordered by shrubs and odoriferous flowers. The first of them affected merely by the limpidity of the stream, the beauty of the oaks, the variety of the shrubs, and the fragrancy of the flowers, will not see them with the eyes of the botanist: he will not observe the uniformity and variety among these shrubs and flowers. Having no interest to remark them, he will want the attention to perceive them; he will receive the sensations from his judgment, but have no remembrance of them. It is the botanist, anxious for his reputation, the scrupulous observer, of these various flowers and shrubs, that can alone make himself attentive to the different sensations he feels, and the different judgments he forms.*

* There is in fact no remembrance without attention, nor any attention without interest.

For

Corporeal pains and pleasures are the principles of human actions.

For the rest, the consciousness or unconsciousness of such impressions, change not their nature; it is therefore true, as I have already said, that all our sensations carry with them a judgment, whose existence, though unnoticed when they fix not our attention, is however not the less real.

It results from the contents of this chapter, that all judgments formed by comparing objects with each other, suppose an interest in us to compare them. Now that interest, necessarily founded on our love of happiness, cannot be any thing else than the effect of bodily sensibility; because there all our pleasures, and all our pains have their source. This question being discussed, I conclude that corporeal pains and pleasures are the unknown principles of all human actions*.

* M. Rousseau, in several parts of his Emilius, denies that bodily sensibility is the principle of all human actions, but the reasons on which he founds his denial, shew that he has not seriously reflected on the question.

Corporeal sensibility the sole cause of human action.

# CHAP. VII.

## CORPOREAL SENSIBILITY IS THE SOLE CAUSE OF OUR ACTIONS, OUR THOUGHTS, OUR PASSIONS, AND OUR SOCIABILITY.

### ACTION.

It is to clothe himself, and adorn his mistress, or his wife, to procure them amusements, to support himself and his family, in a word to enjoy the pleasures attached to the gratification of bodily desires that the artizan and the peasant thinks, contrives, and labours. Corporeal sensibility is therefore the sole mover of man*,

* What is called intellectual pain, or pleasure, may be always referred to some bodily pain or pleasure. Two examples will make this evident.

What makes us fond of gaming, even for trifles? Is it the agreeable sensations we then feel? No: we love it because it relieves us from the disgustful state of being weary of ourselves, and delivers us from that absence of impressions which always produces discontent, and bodily uneasiness. What makes us love high play? The love of money. Why do we love money? From a taste for conveniences, the want of amusements, the desire of avoiding bodily pains and procuring bodily pleasures. Do we not besides love the emotion that high gaming produces in us? Without doubt. But the emotion felt at the moment I lose or gain a thousand, two, or if you will, ten thousand guineas, takes its source,

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he is consequently susceptible, as I am going to prove, but of two sorts of pleasures and pains, the one are

either from the fear of being deprived of the pleasures I possess, or the hope of enjoying those that the increase of my fortune will procure me. Is not this motion in some men the effect of pride also? There are even sufficiently proud to be mortified when fortune forsakes them, though they play but for pins: but this sort of pride is rare. Besides, this same pride, as is proved in the Treatise on the Mind ch. 13. disc. 3. is no other than one of the effects of bodily sensibility. The principle of the love of play is therefore either the fear of disgust, and consequently pain, or the hope of bodily pleasure.

Is it the same with regard to the internal pleasure we feel in succouring the distressed, by performing an act of liberality? This is certainly a very lively pleasure. Every action of this kind should be praised by all, because it is useful to all. But what is a benevolent man? One in whom a spectacle of misery produces a painful sensation.

Born without ideas, without vice, and without virtue, every thing in man, even his humanity, is an acquisition: it is to his education he owes this sentiment. Among all the various ways of inspiring him with it, the most efficacious is to accustom him from childhood, in a manner from the cradle, to ask himself when he beholds a miserable object, by what chance he is not exposed in like manner to the inclemency of the seasons, to hunger, cold, poverty, &c. When the child has been used to put himself in the place of the wretched, that habit gained, he becomes the more touched with their misery, as in deploring their fate it is for human nature in general, and for himself in particular, that he is concerned. An infinity of different sentiments then mix with the first sentiment, and their assemblage composes the total sentiment of pleasure felt by a noble soul in succouring the distressed: a sentiment that he is not always in a situation to analyze.

present

present bodily pains and pleasures, the other are the pains and pleasures of foresight or memory.

PAIN.

I know but two sorts of pain, that which we feel, and that which we foresee. I die of hunger; I feel a present pain. I foresee that I shall soon die of hunger. I feel a pain by foresight, the strength of whose impression is in proportion to the proximity and severity of the pain. The criminal who is going to the scaffold, feels yet no torment, but the foresight that constitutes his present punishment, is begun*.

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We relieve the unfortunate,

1. To avoid the bodily pain of seeing them suffer.

2. To enjoy an example of gratitude, which produces in us at least a confused hope of distant utility.

3. To exhibit an act of power, whose exercise is always agreeable to us, because it always recals to the mind the images of pleasures attached to that power.

4. Because the idea of happiness is constantly connected, in a good education, with the idea of beneficence, and this beneficence in us conciliating the esteem and affection of men, may like riches be regarded as a power, or means of avoiding pains and procuring pleasures.

In this manner, as from an affinity of different sentiments, is made up the total sentiment of the pleasure we feel in the exercise of beneficence.

I have here said enough, to furnish a man of discernment with the means of decomposing, in like manner, every other kind of pleasure, called intellectual, and reducing it to mere sensation.

* There is no doubt but the foresight in those dreadful mo-

Remorse owes its existence to bodily sensation.

## REMORSE.

Remorse is nothing more than a foresight of bodily pain, to which some crime has exposed us: and is consequently the effect of bodily sensibility. We tremble at the description of the flames, the wheels, the fiery scourges, which the heated imagination of the painter or the poet represents. Is a man without fear, and above the law? he feels no remorse from the commission of a wicked action; provided, however, that he have not previously contracted a virtuous habit; for then he will not pursue a contrary conduct, without feeling an uneasiness, a secret inquietude, to which is also given the name of remorse. Experience tells us, that every action which does not expose us to legal punishmnet, or to dishonour, is an action performed in general without remorse*. Solon and Plato loved women and

that arise from the union of men in society: for contempt implies ments, makes men feel a painful bodily sensation. What is this foresight? An effect of the memory. Now it is the property of the memory to throw the organs, to a certain degree, into those contractions into which they would be more forcibly thrown, by the punishment itself. It is evident, therefore, that all pains and pleasures esteemed interior, are so many bodily sensations, and that we cannot understand by the words interior and exterior, any thing but impressions excited by the memory, or by the actual presence of objects.

* If dishonour, or the contempt of mankind be insupportable, it is because it presages evils, as it in part deprives us of the advantages even

Friendship the result of bodily sensibility.

even boys, and avowed it*. Theft was not punished in Sparta: and the Lacedæmonians robbed without remorse. The princes of the East can, with impunity, load their subjects with taxes, and they do it effectually. The inquisitor can with impunity burn any person who does not think as he does, on certain metaphysical points, and it is without remorse that he gluts his vengeance by hideous torments, for the slight offence that is given to his vanity by the contradiction of a Jew or an Infidel. Remorse, therefore owes its existence to the fear of punishment or of shame, which is always reducible, as I have already said to a bodily sensation.

### FRIENDSHIP.

From bodily sensibility flow in like manner, the tears that bathe the urn of my friend. I lament the loss of the man whose conversation relieved me from disquietude, from that disagreeable sensation of the soul, which actually produces bodily pain: I deplore

a want of attention in mankind to serve us, and presents the time to come as void of pleasures, and full of pains; which are all reducible to bodily sensation.

* The Gauls were anciently divided into a great number of clubs, or particular societies, that were composed of about a dozen families, the women of which were in common. They lived among themselves without remorse, but no one durst to have a passion for a woman belonging to another club: the law forbade it, and remorse begins where impunity ends.

him

All pleasures referable to bodily sensation.

him who exposed his life and fortune to save me from sorrow and destruction; who was incessantly employed in promoting my felicity, and increasing it by every sort of pleasure. When a man enters into himself, when he examines the bottom of his soul, he perceives nothing in all these sentiments but the developement of bodily pain and pleasure. What cannot this pain produce? It is by this medium that the magistrate enchains vice, and disarms the assassin.

PLEASURE.

There are two sorts of pleasures, as there are two sorts of pains: the one is the present bodily pleasure, the other is that of foresight. Does a man love fine slaves and beautiful paintings? If he discovers a treasure he is transported. He does not, however, yet feel any bodily pleasure, you will say. It is true; but he gains at that moment, the means of procuring the objects of his desires. Now this foresight of an approaching pleasure, is in fact an actual pleasure: for without the love of fine slaves and paintings, he would have been entirely unconcerned at the discovery of the treasure.

The pleasures of foresight, therefore, constantly suppose the existence of the pleasures of the senses. It is the hopes of enjoying my mistress to-morrow that makes me happy to-day. Foresight or memory converts into an actual enjoyment the acquisition of every means proper to procure pleasure. From what motive in fact do I feel an agreeable sensation every time

Power is coveted as the medium of obtaining pleasure.

I obtain a new degree of esteem, of importance, riches, and above all, of power? It is because I esteem power as the most sure means of increasing my happiness.

POWER.

Men love themselves: they all desire to be happy, and think their happiness would be complete, if they were invested with a degree of power sufficient to procure them every sort of pleasure. The love of power therefore takes its source from the love of pleasure.

Suppose a man absolutely insensible. But, it will be said, he must then be without ideas, and consequently a mere statue. Be it so: but allow that he may exist, and even think. Of what consequence would the sceptre of a monarch be to him? None. In fact, what could the most immense power add to the felicity of a man without feeling.

If power be so coveted by the ambitious, it is as the mean of acquiring pleasure. Power is like gold, a money. The effect of power, and of a bill of exchange is the same. If I be in possession of such a bill, I receive at London or Paris a hundred thousand crowns, and consequently all the pleasures that sum can procure. Am I in possession of a letter of authority or command? I draw in like manner from my fellow-citizens, a like quantity of provisions or pleasures. The effects of riches and power are in a manner the same: for riches are power.

In a country where money is unknown, in what manner

ner can taxes be paid? In kind, that is, in corn, wine, cattle, fowls, &c.—How can commerce be carried on? By exchange. Money therefore is to be regarded as a portable merchandise, which it is agreed, for the facility of commerce, to take in exchange for all other sorts of merchandise. Can it be the same with the dignities and honours with which polished nations recompense the services rendered their country? Why not? What are honours? A money that is in like manner the representative of every kind of provision and pleasure. Suppose a country where the honorary money is not current; suppose the people to be too free, and too haughty, to suffer a very great inequality in the ranks and authority of the people: in what manner must the nation recompense great actions, and such as are useful to the nation? By natural riches and pleasures, that is, by transferring a certain quantity of corn, beer, hay, wine, &c. to the granary and cellar of the hero: by giving him so many acres of land to till, or so many handsome slaves. It was by the possession of Briseis*, that the Greeks recom-

* In the island of Rimini, no man can marry that has not killed an enemy, and borne away his head. The conqueror of two enemies has a right to marry two wives, and so on to fifty. What could be the cause of such an establishment? The situation of these islanders, who being surrounded by nations that were their enemies, would not have been able to resist them, if they had not perpetually excited the courage of their people by the highest rewards.

penced the valour of Achilles. What among the Scandinavians, the Saxons, the Scythians, the Celts, the Samnites, and the Arabs*, was the recompence of courage, of talents and virtues? Sometimes a fine woman, and sometimes a banquet, where feasting on delicate viands, and quaffing delicious liquors, the warriors with transport listened to the songs of the bards.

It is therefore evident, that if money and honours be, among most polished nations, the rewards of virtuous actions, they are in that case the representative of the same possessions, and the same pleasures that poor and free nations grant to their heroes, and for the acquisition of which those heroes expose themselves to the greatest dangers. Therefore, on the supposition, that these dignities and honours were not the representatives of wealth or pleasures, that they were nothing more than empty titles†, those titles being estimated

* Among the presents which the caravans at this day make to the Arabs of the Desert, the most agreeable are marriageable virgins. This was the tribute the victorious Saracens formerly demanded of the conquered. Abderahman, after the conquest of the Spaniards, exacted of the petty prince of the Asturias, the annual tribute of a hundred beautiful virgins.

† If in despotic nations the spring of glory be commonly very weak, it is, because glory there confers no sort of power, because all power is absorbed in despotism; because in those countries a hero, covered with glory, is not secure from the intrigues of a villainous courtier; because he has no certain property in his effects, or his liberty; because, in short, he is liable, at the pleasure of

according

according to their real value, would presently cease to be the objects of desire. To enter a breach, a crown piece, the representative of a pint of brandy, and the enjoyment of a trull must be given to the soldier. The warriors of antiquity, and those of the present day are the same*. Men have not changed their nature, and they will always perform nearly the same actions for the same rewards. If a man be supposed indifferent to pleasure and pain, he will be without action: unsusceptible of remorse, or friendship, or, in short, of the love of riches or of power: for when we are insensible

---

his sovereign, to be thrown into a prison, to be deprived of his wealth and honours, and even of life itself.

Why does the Englishman behold, in the greatest part of foreign noblemen, nothing more than gaudy valets and victims adorned with garlands? Because a peasant in England, is in fact greater than an officer of state in another country: the peasant is free; he can be virtuous with impunity; and sees nothing above him but the law.

It is the desire of glory that must be the most powerful principle of action in poor republics; and it is the love of money, founded on the love of luxury, that in despotic countries is the principle of action, and the moving power in nations subject to that sort of government.

* The irruption of Brennus into Italy, it is well known, was not the first, but the fifth made by the Gauls. Bellovesus had invaded it before him; and how did this chief persuade his countrymen to follow him over the Alps? By showing them the wine of Italy. "Taste this wine, he cried, and see if you like it? "if you do, follow me, and conquer the country that produced it."

to pleasure itself, we must be insensible to the means of acquiring it. What we seek in riches and power, is the means of avoiding bodily pains, and procuring bodily pleasures. If the acquisition of gold and power be always a pleasure, it is because foresight and memory convert into an actual pleasure all the means of obtaining it.

The general conclusion of this chapter, is, that in man all is sensation: a truth of which I shall give a fresh proof, by showing that his sociability is nothing more than a consequence of the same sensations.

## CHAP. VIII.

### OF SOCIABILITY.

Man is by nature a devourer of fruits and of flesh; but he is weak, unarmed, and consequently exposed to the voracity of animals stronger than himself. Man, therefore, to avoid the fury of the tyger and the lion, was forced to unite with man. The object of this union was to attack and kill other animals*, either to feed on them, or to prevent their consuming the fruits

* There is, they say, in Africa, a sort of wild dogs, that go in troops to make war on animals that are stronger than themselves.

Origin of human societies.

and herbs that served him for nourishment. In the mean time mankind multiplied, and to support themselves, they were obliged to cultivate the earth; but to induce them to this, it became necessary to stipulate, that the harvest should belong to the husbandman. For this purpose the inhabitants made agreements or laws among themselves. These laws strengthened the bonds of a union, that, founded on their wants, was the immediate effect of corporeal sensibility*. But cannot this sociability be regarded as an innate quality†,

* Because man is sociable, people have concluded that he is good. But they have deceived themselves. Wolves form societies, but they are not good. We may add, that if man, as M. Fontenelle says, has made God after his own image, the horrible portrait, he has drawn of the Divinity ought to make the goodness of man very equivocal. Hobbes has been reproached with this maxim: *The strong child is a bad child*, he has however only repeated in other terms, this admired verse of Corneille,

Qui peut tout ce qu'il veut, veut plus que ce qu'il doit.
He that can do whatever he will, wills more than he ought.

And this other verse of La Fontaine,

La raison du plus fort est toujours la meilleure.
The strongest always reason best.

They who write the romance of man, condemn this maxim of Hobbes; they that write his history, admire it; and the necessity of laws proves it to be true.

† That curiosity, which certain writers regard as an innate principle, is the desire in us of being happy, and of improving our condition: it is no other than the developement of corporeal sensibility.

Interest and want the principles of sociability.

a species of amiable morality? All that we learn from experience on this head, is, that in man, as in other animals, sociability is the effect of want. If the desire of defending themselves makes the grazing animals, as horses, bulls, &c. assemble in herds; that of chasing, attacking, and conquering their prey, forms in like manner a society of carnivorous animals, such as foxes and wolves.

Interest and want are the principles of all sociability. It is, therefore, these principles alone (of which few writers have given clear ideas) that unite men among themselves: and the force of their union is always in proportion to that of habit and want. From the moment the young savage*, or the young bear, is able to provide for his nourishment and his defence, the one

* The greatest part of travellers, say that the attachment of the Negroes to their children, resembles that of brute animals to their off-spring: this attachment ceases when they are able to provide for themselves. See *Melanges interessans des Voyages d'Asie, d'Amérique*, &c.

The Anxicos, says Draper on this head, in his voyage to Africa, eat their slaves: human flesh is as common in their markets, as that of beef in ours. The father feasts on the flesh of his son, and the son on the flesh of his father; brothers and sisters eat each other, and the mother without remorse, feeds on the child she has just brought into the world. In short, the Negroes, says F. Labat, have neither gratitude nor affection for their relations, nor compassion for the sick. Among these people, he adds, mothers are seen inhuman enough to abandon their children to the voracity of the tygers of the woods.

quits

Filial attachment should be but a secondary affection.

quits the hut, and the other the den of his parents*. The eagle, in like manner, drives away her young ones from the nest, the moment they have sufficient strength to dart upon their prey, and live without her aid.

The bond that attaches children to their parents, and parents to their children, is less strong than is commonly imagined. A too great strength in this bond would be even fatal to societies. The first regard of a citizen should be for the laws, and the public prosperity; I speak it with regret, filial affection should be in man subordinate to the love of patriotism. If this last affection do not take place of all others, where shall we find a measure of virtue and vice? It would then be no more, and all morality would be abolished.

For what reason, in fact, has justice and the love of God been recommended to men, above all things? On account of the danger to which a too great love of their parents would expose them. If the excess of this passion were sanctioned; if it were declared the principal attachment, a son would then have a right to rob

* Nothing is more common in Europe, than to see children desert their parents, when they become old, infirm, incapable of labour, and forced to subsist by beggary. We see, in the country, one father nourish seven or eight children, but seven or eight children are not sufficient to nourish one father. If all children be not so unnatural, if some of them have affection and humanity, it is to education and example they owe that humanity. Nature has made them diminutive bears.



his

his neighbour, or plunder the public treasury, to supply the wants, and promote the comforts of his father. Every family would form a little nation, and these nations having opposite interests, would be continually at war with each other.

Every writer, who to give us a good opinion of his own heart, founds the sociability of man on any other principle than that of bodily and habitual wants, deceives weak minds, and gives them a false idea of morality.

Nature, no doubt, designed that gratitude and habit should form in man a sort of gravitation, by which they should be impelled to a love of their parents: but it has also designed that man should have, in the natural desire of independence, a repulsive power, which should diminish the too great force of that gravitation *. Thus the daughter joyfully leaves the house of her mother to go to that of her husband; and the son quits with pleasure his native spot, for an employment in India, an office in a distant country, or merely for the pleasure of travelling.

Notwithstanding the pretended force of sentiment, friendship, and habit, mankind change at Paris, every day, the part of the town, their acquaintance and

* Man hates dependence: whence, perhaps, comes the hatred of his father and mother; and the proverb, founded on common and constant observation, that *the love of relations descends, and does not ascend.*

their

their friends. Do men seek to make dupes? They exaggerate the force of sentiment and friendship, they represent sociability as *an innate affection or principle.* Can they, in reality, forget that there is but one principle of this kind, which is corporeal sensibility? It is to this principle alone, that we owe our self-love, and the powerful love of independence: if men were, as it is said, drawn toward each other by a strong and mutual attraction, would the heavenly Legislator have commanded them to love each other, and to honour their parents *? Would he not have left this point to nature, which, without the aid of any law, obliges men to eat and drink when they are hungry and thirsty, to open their eyes to the light, and keep their hands out of the fire?

Travellers do not inform us that the love which mankind bear to their fellows, is so common as pretended. The sailor, escaped from a wreck, and cast on an unknown coast, does not run with open arms to embrace the first man he meets. On the contrary, he hides himself in a thicket, where he observes the manners of the inhabitants, and then presents himself trembling before them.

But if an European vessel chance to approach an unknown island, do not the savages, it is said, run in

* The command to love our fathers and mothers, proves that the love of our parents is more the effect of habit and education, than of nature.

crowds

crowds towards the ship? They are, without doubt, amazed at the sight, they are struck with the novelty of our dress, our arms and implements. The appearance excites their curiosity. But what desire succeeds to this first sensation? That of possessing the objects of their admiration. They become less gay and more thoughtful; are busied in contriving means to obtain, by force or fraud, the objects of their desires: for that purpose they watch the favourable opportunity to rob, plunder, and massacre the Europeans, who, in their conquests of Mexico and Peru, gave them early examples of similar injustice and cruelty.

The conclusion of this chapter is, that the principles of morality and politics, like those of all other sciences, ought to be established on a great number of facts and observations. Now, what is the result of the observations hitherto made on morality? That the love of men for their brethren, is the effect of the necessity of mutual assistance, and of an affinity of wants, dependent on that corporeal sensibility, which I regard as the principle of our actions, our virtues, and our vices.

In persevering in my opinion on this point, I think I ought to defend the Treatise on the Mind against the odious imputations of hypocrisy and ignorance.

The love of women sometimes excites virtue in men.

# CHAP. IX.

## A JUSTICATION OF THE PRINCIPLES ADMITTED IN THE TREATISE ON THE MIND.

When the Treatise on the Mind appeared, the theologians regarded me as a corruptor of morals. They reproached me with having maintained, after Plato, Plutarch, and experience, that the love of women had sometimes excited virtue in men.

The fact, however, is notorious: their reproach, therefore, is ridiculous. If bread, it has been said to them, be a recompence for labour and industry, why not women *? Every object of desire may become an

* If hunger be the principle of so many actions, and has so much power over men, how can we imagine that the desire for women can have no effect on them? At the moment a youth is heated with the first fires of love, let its enjoyments be proposed to him as the recompence of his application: let him be reminded, even in the arms of his mistress, that it is to his talents and his virtues that he owes her favours. The young man, docile, assiduous, virtuous, will then enjoy in a manner agreeable to his health, to his soul, and to the public good, the same delight that he would not enjoy, in another situation, without exhausting his strength, debasing his mind, and dissipating his fortune, by living in a state of stupid ebriety.

encouragement

Valour inspired by women in the barbarous ages.

encouragement to virtue, when it is not to be obtained but by services rendered to our country.

In those ages, when the invasions of the Northern nations, and the incursions of swarms of plunderers, kept the inhabitants continually in arms, when the women being frequently exposed to the insults of ravagers, were in continual want of protectors, the virtue then in highest esteem was valour. The favours of the women, therefore, were the recompence of the most valiant, and consequently every man ambitious of those favours, endeavoured to elevate himself to that enthusiastic courage, which about four centuries since animated the renowned knight-errants.

The love of pleasure was therefore in those ages the productive principle of the only virtue then known; that is, valour. When the manners changed, and a more improved policy relieved the timid virgin from insult, then beauty (for in government all things depend on each other) less exposed to outrages of the ravagers, held its defenders in less esteem. If the enthusiasm of women for valour then decreased in proportion to their fear; if the esteem preserved to this day, for that sort of courage be only the esteem of tradition; if in this age the youngest, most assiduous, obsequious, and above all, the most opulent lover is commonly preferred, it is not surprising; all is as it ought to be.

The favours of women, therefore, according to the changes that happen in manners and governments, either

The love of women not incompatible with virtue.

ther are, or cease to be, the encouragements to certain virtues. Love in itself is no evil. Why should we regard pleasures as the cause of the political corruption of manners? Men have had in all ages nearly the same wants, and in all ages have satisfied those wants.

The ages, or the nations most addicted to love, have been those in which men were the strongest and most robust. Edda, the Erse poets, in short, all history informs us, that the ages esteemed heroic and virtuous, have not been the most temperate.

Youth are strongly attracted by women: they are more eager after pleasure than persons of riper years; they are, however, commonly more humane and virtuous, at least more active, and activity is a virtue.

It was neither love nor pleasures that corrupted Asia, enervated the manners of the Medes, the Assyrians, Indians, &c. The Greeks, the Saracens, and Scandinavians, were neither more reserved nor more chaste than the Persians and Medes, and yet the former have never been cited among effeminate nations.

If there be a time when the favours of women can become a principle of corruption, it is when they are venal *; when money, far from being the recompence of merit and talents, becomes that of intrigue and flattery; in short, when a satrap or a nabob can, by

* It may be asked by some, perhaps, when the time was that the favours of women were not venal?

means

means of injustice and crimes, obtain from the sovereign the right of pillaging the people, and applying the spoil to his own emolument.

It is with women as with honours, they are the common objects of the desire of men. If honours be the price of iniquity; if to attain them the great must be flattered; if the weak must be sacrificed to the powerful, and the interest of a nation to that of a sultan; then honours, so justly invented as a recompence and decoration of merit and talents, become the source of corruption. Women, like honours, may, therefore, according to times and manners, become the alternate incitements to vice or virtue.

The political corruption of manners therefore consists only in the depravation of the means employed to procure pleasures. The rigid moralist who preaches incessantly against pleasures, is nothing more than the echo of his ghostly father. How can we extinguish every desire in man without destroying every principle of action? He who is affected by no interest, can have no motive to produce any action worthy of a man.

Hunger the most habitual principle of activity in man.

# CHAP. X.

THE PLEASURES OF THE SENSES ARE, IN A MANNER EVEN UNKNOWN TO NATIONS THEMSELVES, THEIR MOST POWERFUL MOTIVES.

THE springs of action in man are corporeal pains and pleasures. Why is hunger the most habitual principle of his activity? Because among all his wants it is that which returns the most frequently and commands the most imperiously. It is hunger and the difficulty of appeasing it, that gives the carnivorous animals of the forest so much superiority of intellect over the grazing herds. It is hunger that furnishes the former with a hundred ingenious methods of attacking and surprising their game. It is hunger that keeps the savages for six months together on the lakes, and in the woods: teaches them to bend the bow, to weave their nets, and set the snares for their prey. It is hunger also that among polished nations puts the people in action, teaches them to cultivate the land, learn a mechanical trade, and fill a difficult employ. But in the exercise of these employs, each individual forgets the motive that led him to undertake it; for the mind is occupied, not with the want, but with the

Pleasure and pain are the only principles of human action.

means of appeasing it. The difficulty is not to eat, but to provide the repast.

Pleasure and pain are, and always will be, the only principles of action in man*. If heaven had provided for all his wants; if nourishment proper for the body had been, like air and water, an element of nature, man would have been for ever wrapt up in sloth.

Hunger, and consequently pain, is the principle of activity in the poor, that is of the greatest number: and pleasure is the principle of activity in those who are above indigence, that is, the rich. Now, among all the pleasures, that which without doubt acts the the most forcibly on us, and communicates the greatest energy to the soul, is the love of women. Nature, by attaching the greatest intoxication to the enjoy-

* If wants be our only motives, it must then be to them we owe the invention of arts and sciences. It is to that of hunger we are indebted for the art of tilling the soil, of forging the ploughshare, &c. It is to the necessity of defending ourselves against the rigour of the seasons that we owe the art of building, of providing ourselves with apparel, &c.

As to what concerns the magnificence of equipages, dress, and furniture, with regard to music, theatres, in a word, all the arts of luxury, it is to love, to the desire of pleasing, and the fear of disgust, that we are in like manner to attribute the invention. Without love what arts would have yet been unknown? What a stupor would have pervaded nature! Men without wants would be destitute of the principle of action: it is to the want of pleasure that youth owe, in part, their activity, and the superiority they possess, in that respect, over persons of a more advanced age.

ment

ment of them, intended to make them one of the most powerful principles of our activity *.

* There are, it is said, among the learned, some who condemn themselves to live in seclusion from the world. Now, how can we persuade ourselves, that in these the love of talents is founded on the love of corporeal pleasures, and above all that of women? How can we reconcile these contradictions? By supposing it may be with a man of talents as with a miser; if he deprive himself of necessaries to-day, it is with the hope of enjoying superfluities to-morrow. Does the miser wish for a fine seat, and the man of talents for a fine woman? If to attain these be required great riches, and a great reputation, these two men will labour to increase, the one his riches, and the other his renown. Now, if during the time employed in the acquisition of the money and the fame, they should grow old, and contract habits that they cannot break, without efforts of which age has rendered them incapable: the miser and the man of talents will then die, the one without his house, and the other without his mistress.

It is not only between these two men, but also between the coquet, and the same miser, that we find an infinity of similitudes. Each of them is more happy than is imagined, and each in the same manner. The miser, when counting his money, enjoys the approaching possession of every object that may be had in exchange for gold: and the coquet admiring herself in her glass, enjoys in like manner by anticipation all the homage that her beauty and graces can procure. I would advise these two to stop where they are, and not procure either a mansion or lovers; for they will find, in the enjoyments of those objects of their desires, a disgust of which they are at present ignorant.

The state of desire is a state of pleasure. Houses, lovers, and women, that riches, beauty and talents can procure, are pleasures of foresight, certainly less vivid, but more durable than real and

Pleasure and pain the only springs of government.

No passion produces greater changes in man; its empire extends even to brutes. The timid animal that trembles at the approach of another which is even weaker than itself, becomes animated by love. At the command of love he stops, shakes off every fear, attacks and defeats his equals, or even his superiors in strength. There are no dangers, no labours by which love can be dismayed. It is the spring of life. In proportion as its desires die away, man loses his activity; and by degrees, death deprives him of every other sensation.

Corporeal pleasure and pain are the real and only springs of all government. We do not properly desire glory, riches and honours, but the pleasures only of which glory, riches, and honours are the representatives; and whatever men may say, while we give the workman money that he may drink, to excite him to labour, we must acknowledge the power that the pleasures of the senses have over us.

When I said, in the Treatise of the Mind, that it is from the stalk of corporeal pleasure and pain, that we gather all our joys and our pains, I published an important truth.—What follows? That it is not in the enjoyment of these same pleasures, that the political

corporeal pleasures. The body soon becomes exhausted: the imagination never. So that of all our pleasures, it is the latter, that in general, give us, in the total of life, the greatest sum of happiness.

depravation

Object proposed by the author.

depravation of manners can consist. Who in fact are a corrupted and effeminate people? They who acquire by vicious means the same pleasures that illustrious nations acquire by virtuous means.

The declamations of certain moralists will never prove any thing against an author, whose principles are justified and confirmed by experience.

Let not this discussion of corporeal sensibility be regarded as foreign to my subject. What have I proposed? To shew that all men equally well organised, have an equal disposition for understanding. What have I done toward it? I have distinguished between the mind or understanding, and the soul: I have proved, that the soul is in us nothing but the faculty of sensation; that the mind is the effect of it: that in man all is sensation; that, consequently, corporeal sensibility is the principle of his wants, his passions, his sociability, his ideas, his judgments, his desires, and his actions; and that, in short, if all things can be explained by corporeal sensibility, it is useless to admit of any other faculty in us *.

Man is a machine, which being put in motion by

* Besides the faculty of sensation, man is said to be endowed with that of remembrance. I know it: but as the organ of the memory is corporeal, as its office consists in recalling impressions that are past, and as it must excite in us actual sensations in order to produce that effect, I am not the less authorised to assert, that in man all is sensation.

corporeal sensibility, ought to perform all that it executes. It is the wheel, which moved by a torrent, raises the pistons, and with them the water designed to be thrown into the bason prepared to receive it.

After having thus shown that every thing in us is reducible to sensation and remembrance, and that our sensations are produced by the five senses only; to discover next if a greater or less understanding be the effect of a greater or less perfection of the organs, we must examine, if in fact, the superiority of the mind or understanding be always in proportion to the acuteness of the senses, and the extent of the memory. If experience prove the contrary, there is no doubt that the usual inequality of minds must proceed from another cause.

It is, therefore, to the sole examination of this fact, the question proposed is now reduced, and it is to this examination we shall owe its solution.

## CHAP. XI.

### OF THE UNEQUAL EXTENT OF THE MEMORY.

I SHALL here only repeat what I have said in the book on the Mind, and shall observe:

1. That

Memory may exist without genius or great understanding.

1. That the Hardouins, the Longuerues, the Scaligers, in short all the prodigies of memory, have commonly had but little genius, and that they are never placed in the same rank with Machiavel, Newton, and Tacitus*.

2. That to make discoveries of any kind, and deserve the title of inventor, or a man of genius; if we must, as Descartes has proved, meditate more than learn, a man may have a great memory, without a a great understanding †.

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* So Pope in his Essay on Criticism,

As on the land while here the ocean gains,
In other parts it leaves wide sandy plains;
Thus in the soul while memory prevails,
The solid pow'r of understanding fails;
Where beams of warm imagination play,
The memory's soft figures melt away.

This seems to be a vulgar error; a strong memory and a fertile invention frequently go together, the former being of the utmost utility to the latter. If a man shall sit down to invent, he will find that a complete retrospect of all he has seen, heard or read, relative to any science, will afford him the greatest assistance in his further inventions or improvements in that science. T.

† A great memory makes a great scholar; meditation makes the man of genius. The original mind, the mind of a peculiar turn, supposes a comparison of objects with each other, and a discernment of relations unknown to ordinary men. It is not so with the man of the world: his mind is composed of taste and memory. He who knows the most remarkable passages in history,

Means of acquiring a strong memory.

He who would acquire a great memory, should improve it by daily practice. He that would acquire a certain habit of meditation, should in like manner improve it by daily exercise. Now the time spent in meditation, is not employed in storing up facts in the memory. The man who compares and meditates much, has therefore commonly the less memory, as he makes the less use of it. Of what use, moreover, is a great memory? The most common will answer the purpose of a great man. He who understands his own language, has already a great number of ideas. To merit the title of a man of understanding, what is he to do? Compare his ideas with each other, and by that mean obtain some conclusion new and interesting, either by being useful or agreeable. The memory charged with all the words of a language, and consequently with all the ideas of a people, is like a pallet covered with a certain number of colours: the painter has on that pallet the matter for an excellent picture; it is for him so to

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the most bon mots, and curious anecdotes, is the most agreeable companion. Newton, Locke, and Corneille, were understood by few. The man of profound penetration is not adapted to the multitude. If the man of the world be not a sublime poet, a fine painter, a profound philosopher, or great general, he is at least quite amiable. If his reputation do not extend beyond the circle of his acquaintance, it is because he does not write, does not improve any science, and render himself useful to mankind, and therefore ought not to expect much esteem.

use

Memory more extensive than is commonly imagined.

use and dispose them, that they may produce a great truth in the shades, and a great force of colouring, in a word, a beautiful painting.

A common memory has even more extent than is imagined. In Germany and England there is scarcely a man of education, who does not understand three or four languages*. Now if the study of those languages be comprised in the common plan of education, it cannot suppose any thing more than a common organisation: all men are therefore endowed by nature with more memory than is requisite to investigate the greatest truths†. Hence I infer, that if the superiority of the mind consists principally, as Mr. Hobbes remarked, in the knowledge of the true signification of words, and if there be no man who in reflecting on

* If the French understand no language but their own, it is the effect of their education, and not their organisation: let them pass some years at London or Florence, and they will easily understand English or Italian.

† Nature, we are told has given to every nation some peculiar quality or genius. There is no nation in Europe that has not made some successful alterations in their military exercises and evolutions, after the Prussians. But too much struck with the brilliancy of these evolutions, have those nations cultivated the means of exciting courage in their soldiers? I doubt it. The Europeans have not the same motives to expose their lives in battle, as the Greeks and Romans had: and consequently, the courage of armies is not manifested in enterprizes equally hazardous; and may be reduced, perhaps, in every warrior, to the sole principle of not being the first to run away.

those

those of his own language only, would not find more questions to discuss than he could resolve in the course of a long life, no man can complain of his memory. There are, it is said, quick and slow memories: we have in fact, a quick remembrance of the words of our own language, and a more slow remembrance of those of a foreign tongue; especially, if we speak it but seldom. But what can we hence conclude? Only that we have a remembrance of objects more or less prompt, according as they are more or less familiar to us. There is but one real and remarkable difference in memories, which is the inequality of their extent. Now, if all men equally well organised, are, as I have proved, endowed with a memory sufficient to exalt them to the highest ideas, genius is then not the product of a great memory. Consult on this subject, chap. iii. disc. iii. of the Treatise on the Mind. I have there considered this question in every light. My opinion appears to have been generally adopted, because experience has confirmed its truth, and proved, that in general, it is not to the defect of the memory we ought to refer the imperfection of the mind or understanding.

Does it proceed from the unequal perfection of the other organs? I shall now examine that question.——

CHAP.

Unequal perfection of the organs of the senses.

# CHAP. XII.

## OF THE UNEQUAL PERFECTION OF THE ORGANS OF THE SENSES.

If in men all be corporeal sensation, they do not then differ among themselves, but in the degrees of their sensations. The five senses are the organs of those sensations; they are the passages by which ideas penetrate even to the soul. But are these passages equally open in all; and according to the different structure of the organs of sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell*, ought not each man to smell, taste, touch, see, and hear indifferently? Lastly, should not those men who have the finest organs have the greatest discernment†, and be perhaps, the only men that can possess it in any remarkable degree?

* Let it not be supposed, however, that there is an extreme difference in the common organisation of men. All have not the same ear, yet in a concert, at certain tunes, all the musicians, all the dancers in an opera, and all the soldiers of a battalion move equally in measure.

† Among men the most perfectly organised, if there be few of remarkable acuteness, it is, we are told, because the understanding is the joint effect of the acuteness of the senses, and of a good edu-

Experience,

Understanding not dependent on the perfection of the senses.

Experience, I answer, does not here agree with reason: it demonstrates clearly that it is to the senses we owe our ideas, but it does not demonstrate that our discernment is always in proportion to the greater or less perfection of the senses. Women, for example, who are of a more delicate texture than men, have more sensibility in the touch, but have no more understanding* than Voltaire, the man, perhaps, the most sur-

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cation. Be is so: but on this supposition it would be at least impossible that a good education, without a peculiar and remarkable perfection of the senses, could form a great man. Now this fact is disproved by experience.

* The organisation of the two sexes, is without doubt, in some respects very different: but is this difference to be regarded as the cause of the inferiority of the minds of women? No: on the contrary, is is evident, that no woman being organised as a man*, none of them consequently should have as much understanding. Now, can the genius of Sappho, Hyppatia, Elizabeth, Catherine II. &c. be esteemed inferior to that of men? If women be in general inferior, it is because in general they receive a still worse education. Compare together women of very different conditions, such as princesses and chambermaids; I say, that these two ranks of women have commonly as much undestanding as their husbands. Why? Because the two sexes have here received an education equally bad.

* Will this be allowed, as to what regards the sensibility of the organs? Are there not many women of more robust organisation than the generality of men? T.

prising

Understanding not dependent on the perfection of the senses.

prising of all others, for the fecundity, extent, and diversity of his talents.

Homer and Milton were early blind. A blindness so premature should imply some imperfection in the organ of sight: yet how strong and brilliant were their imaginations? A similar observation may be made on M. Buffon; he is short-sighted: yet what mind more comprehensive, and what style more beautiful*. Among those who have the sense of hearing in the greatest perfection, are there any superior to the St. Lamberts, the Saurins, the Nivernois, &c. Of those who have the senses of tasting and smelling in the greatest perfection, are there any who have more genius than Diderot, Rousseau, Marmontel, Duclos, &c.? In whatever manner we interrogate experience, it will constantly answer, that the greater or less superiority of mind is independent of the greater or less perfection of the organs of the senses, and that all men equally well organised, are endowed by nature with acuteness of the senses sufficient to lead them to the greatest discoveries in mathematics, chymistry, politics, physics, &c.†

* It has not been remarked, that in the greatest painters, the sense of seeing is much more acute than that of other men.

† If a greater or less understanding depends on the greater or less acuteness of the senses, it is probable that the different temperatures of the air, the difference of latitudes and aliments, must have some influence on minds, and consequently that the country most favoured by heaven should produce the most ingenious in-

If

Understanding not dependent on the perfection of the senses.

If the sublimity of the mind supposed so great a perfection in the organs, before a man is engaged in difficult studies, before he enters for example, into the career of letters or of politics, we should examine if he have the eye of an eagle, the feeling of the sensitive plant, the nose of the fox, and the ear of the mole.

Dogs and horses, they say, are esteemed more or less, according as they spring from this or that race. Therefore, before we employ a man, we should ask if he sprang from an ingenious or stupid father. Now

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habitants. Now, how can we imagine, that from the beginning of time to the present day, the inhabitants of such country must not have acquired a remarkable superiority over other nations? That they must not have invented the best laws, and consequently have been the best governed? That they must not in the course of time have subdued the other nations, and in short, have produced, in every class, the greatest number of renowned men?

The generating climate of such a people is hitherto unknown. *History does not point out any one among* the nations endowed *with a constant superiority* of understanding above all others: it shows, on the contrary, that from Delhi to Petersburg, all nations have been successively ignorant and enlightened: that in the same situations every people, as Dr. Robertson remarks, have the same laws, and the same sagacity, and that we find, for this reason, the manners of the ancient Germans among the modern Americans.

The difference of latitude and food has therefore no influence on the minds of men, and perhaps it has less than is imagined on their bodies. In fact, the greatest part of politicians in calculating the population of cities and empires from the number of deaths, have thence observed, that, at least in the greatest part of Europe, the duration of life is nearly the same.

these

Understanding not dependent on the perfection of the senses.

these questions are never asked; Why? Because the most ingenious fathers frequently beget foolish children; because men the best organised, have frequently but little understanding, and in short, because experience proves the inutility of such questions. All that it teaches us, is, that there are men of genius of every make, and every temperament, that neither the sanguine, the bilious nor phlegmatic, the great or little, the fat, the lean, the robust, the tender, the melancholic (2.) nor the strong and vigorous, are always the most ingenious*.

But suppose a man to have extreme sensibility, what follows? That he will sometimes have sensations unknown to the common rank of men: that he will feel what a less delicate organisation will not permit another man to feel. But will he have more discernment? No: because those sensations, always fruitless till the moment they are compared with each other, will constantly preserve the same relation to each other†. But,

* M. Rousseau, p. 300 and 323 of his Emilius, says, "The "more hearty and robust a child grows the more judicious and "respectable he becomes. To enjoy the instruments of our in-"telligence, the body must be healthful and robust." A good constitution of body renders the operations of the mind easy and efficacious. But if M. Rousseau consults experience, he will find, that the sickly, the delicate, and the deformed, have as much understanding as the most vigorous, and well made. Witness Pascal, Pope, Boileau, and Scarron.

† A sensation of the memory is nothing but an additional fact, that may be replaced by another. Now a fact adds nothing to the

suppose

Understanding not dependent on the perfection of the senses.

suppose the understanding to be proportionate to the acuteness of the senses; and that there are truths which cannot be comprehended but by ten or twelve men of the first organisation. In this case the human mind would not be capable of perfectibility. I may also add, that these men so finely organised, would necessarily attain a degree of knowledge in the sciences, that would be incommunicable to the common rank of men. Now, such degree of knowledge has never been perceived.

There are no truths contained in the works of Locke and Newton, that are not now comprehensible by all men of a common organisation, and that have not any extraordinary excellence of tasting, smelling, seeing, hearing, and feeling.

I may also add, that as there are no two things alike in nature*, each of those persons who have the

aptitude men have to understanding, because that aptitude is nothing else than the power of observing the relations that different objects have to each other.

* Does the dissimilitude of beings exist in their principles, or in their developments? I know not: Of this we are certain, that the race of cattle become stronger or weaker, improve or degenerate, according to the goodness and abundance of their pasture, and the same we observe in oaks: when we see some short, some tall, some strait, and others crooked; in short, if no two trees are absolutely alike, it is, perhaps, because no two of them have received precisely the same culture, or are placed in a similar situation, are exposed to the same wind, or planted in the same soil.

finest

Climate and food have no effect on the intellectual faculties.

finest organisation, must be, in some respects, superior to the rest. Every man therefore, must feel sensations, and acquire ideas that are incommunicable to his fellows. Now there are no ideas of this kind: whoever has such as are clear, can easily communicate them to others. There are, therefore, no ideas that men, of ordinary organisation cannot attain.

The causes that would operate most efficaciously on minds, would be, without doubt, the differences of climate and food. Now, as I have already said, the gross Englishman who feeds on butter and flesh, and breathes a foggy air, has not certainly less understanding than the lean Spaniard, who lives on garlic and onions, in a very dry atmosphere. Shaw, an English physician, who from the fidelity and accuracy of his observations, as well as from the late date of his travels in Barbary, deserves our confidence, says, when speaking of the Moors. "The small progress this people have made "in the arts and sciences, is not the effect of incapa- "city or natural stupidity. The Moors have an acute "understanding, and even genius. If they do not "apply themselves to the study of the sciences, it is be- "cause being without motives to emulation, their go- "vernment does not leave them either liberty or leisure

Now, the time of the developement of inanimate beings, answers to that of the education of man, which is, perhaps, never the same, because, no two of them, as I have proved in the first section, can receive precisely the same instructions.

Powerful patronage will always produce great talents.

"sufficient to cultivate and improve them. The Moors, "like the greatest part of the Orientals, being born "slaves, are naturally enemies to all labour that does "not directly promote their present and personal in-"terest."

It is liberty alone that can kindle among a people the sacred fire of glory and emulation. If there be periods when, like those rare birds brought into a country by a storm of wind, great men appear on a sudden in an empire, this is not to be regarded as the effect of a physical, but of a moral cause. In every government, where talents are rewarded, those rewards, like the teeth of the serpent, planted by Cadmus, will produce men. If Descartes, Corneille, &c. rendered the reign of Lewis XIII. illustrious; Racine, Bayle, &c. that of Lewis XIV. Voltaire, Montesquieu, Fontenelle, &c. that of Lewis XV. it is, because the arts and sciences were under these different reigns, successively protected by Richelieu, Colbert, and the late duke of Orleans the regent. Great men, whatever has been said, belong not to the reign of Augustus or Lewis XIV. but to the reign that protects them.

If any imagine that it is to the first fire of youth, to the freshness of the organs, if I may so say, that we owe the fine compositions of great men; they deceive themselves. Racine was but thirty, when he produced his Alexander, and his Andromache; but he was fifty, when he wrote Athalia, and the latter piece is certainly not

Genius not affected by our state of health.

not inferior to the former*. It is not, moreover, a slight indisposition, which may occasion a state of health more or less delicate, that can extinguish genius.

We do not enjoy every year the same health; yet the lawyer gains or loses every year nearly the same number of causes; the physician kills or cures nearly the same number of patients; and the man of genius, distracted neither by business nor pleasure, by violent passions nor grievous maladies, produces every year nearly the same number of compositions.

Whatever difference there may be in the diet of nations, or the climate they inhabit; in a word, whatever difference there may be in their temperament†, it will not augment or diminish the aptitude

* At the end of a certain number of years, a man is, they say, no longer the same composer. Voltaire at sixty was no longer the Voltaire of thirty. Be it so: yet he was equally sagacious. If two men, without being exactly similar, can run as fast, leap as high, shoot as true, and strike a ball as far, the one as the other, they may, without being precisely the same, have an equal understanding.

† The aptitude or disposition for understanding or discernment, as I shall show hereafter, is only an aptitude to discern the resemblance or difference, the agreement or disagreement between different objects. That the diversity of temperaments and climates may occasion a difference in the manners and inclinations of a people; that the savage hunters in woody countries, would be herdsmen in a grazing country, may very well be: but it is not

The understanding is not dependent on the bodily faculties.

that men have to understanding. It is not, therefore, on the strength of the body*, or the juvenility of the organs, or the greater or less perfection of the senses, that the greater or less superiority of the understanding depends. To conclude, that experience demonstrates the truth of this fact, is no great matter; I can

less true, that in every country the inhabitants constantly perceive the same relations between the same objects. So, from the moment that these wandering natives unite into nations, when the marshes are drained, and forests cut down, the diversity of climates has had no sensible influence on their minds; and we therefore find in Sweden and Denmark, as accomplished geometricians, chymists, natural philosophers, moralists, &c. as in Greece or Italy. "The climate of Persia, says Chardin, is the most proper "to promote the vigour both of body and mind." Their climate, however, gives the Persians no more genius than the French.

* If the superiority of the mind be independent of the greater or less vigour of temperaments, and the greater or less acuteness of the senses, where shall we seek the cause of this superiority? In the perfection of the interior organisation I shall be told: but, I answer, if the interior perfection of a clock be shown by the precision with which it marks the hour, in like manner, (at least, so far as regards the understanding) by that of the five senses, to which it owes all its ideas. The perfection of the exterior organisation, supposes, therefore, that of the interior. But to prove that this last sort of perfection can have no influence on the understanding, it will suffice to show, (in conformity to experience) that its superiority is entirely independent of the greater or less perfection of the five senses.

also

also prove, that if this fact exists, it is because it cannot exist otherwise, and also, that it is to a cause hitherto unknown, that we must look for the explanation of the phenomenon of the inequality of understandings.

To confirm the truth of this opinion, I think, that after having demonstrated that in men every thing is sensation, we must conclude, that if they differ among themselves, it constantly proceeds from the different degrees of their sensations only.

## CHAP. XIII.

### ON THE DIFFERENT MANNER OF RECEIVING SENSATIONS.

MEN have different tastes: but this difference may be either the effect of habit and education, or of the unequal sensibility of their organisation. If the Negro, for example, feels more pleasure in beholding the sooty complexion of an African beauty, than in the roses and lilies of an European, it is in him the effect of habit. If men, according to the country they inhabit, are more affected with this or that sort of music*, and

* M. Rousseau in his Musical Dictionary, relates a remarkable instance of this kind. There is, says he, among the Swiss a tune

become in consequence susceptible of particular impressions, this is also the effect of habit. All tastes that are factitious, and produced by the difference of education, are not here the objects of my inquiry; I here treat only of the different tastes produced by the mere different sensations felt at the presence of the same object.

To know exactly what this difference is, we must have been successively ourselves and others. Now as this can never be, it is only by considering, with very great attention, the different impressions which the same objects appear to make on different men, that we can arrive at some discovery relative to this matter. If we examine this point closely we shall find, that if one saw square what another saw round; if milk appeared white to one and red to another; if to some men a rose seemed a thistle, and a well-proportioned man appeared a monster, it would be impossible for men to

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they call Ranz des Vaches, which was held so dear by them, that it was forbidden, under pain of death, to play it among the Swiss troops: for it made those that heard it burst into tears, desert, or die, by exciting in them an ardent desire again to see their native country. It is in vain to seek in this tune for such energetic accents as are capable of producing such wonderful effects. These effects are never produced on strangers, but proceed from habit, and by recalling to the minds of those who hear this tune, their country, their youth, their former pleasures, and manner of living, whence arises a piercing grief on reflecting that all these are no more.

com-

communicate their ideas, and understand each other: but they do understand each other; the same objects therefore excite in them nearly the same impressions.

To make this matter more clear, let us see in one and the same instance, in what men differ and resemble each other.

They all resemble each other in one point; and that is, they would all free themselves from disquietude: consequently they would all be employed, and the more lively that employment, the more agreeable it is to them; provided, however, the impression be not so pungent as to excite pain.

Men differ in this, that the degree of emotion which one regards as an excess of pleasure, is sometimes in another the beginning of pain. The eye of my friend may be pained by a degree of light that gives me pleasure; and yet we both agree that light is the most pleasing object in nature. Now whence proceeds this uniformity of judgment, with this difference of sensation? From the insignificancy in the degree of difference, and because a tender sight finds the same pleasure in a small degree of light, that a strong sight does in the blaze of a mid-day sun. Let us pass from physics to morality, and we shall see still less difference in the manner in which men are affected by the same objects, and shall find, in consequence, among the Chinese* all our European pro-

* Except in what has an immediate and peculiar relation to the

verbs: whence I conclude, that the trivial differences in the organisation of different people, ought not to be regarded; for in comparing the same objects every nation forms the same conclusions.

The invention of the same arts wherever there are the same wants, and where the arts have been equally encouraged by government, is another proof of the essential equality of minds. To confirm this truth, I may also cite the resemblance observed in the laws and governments of different people. Asia, says M. Poivre, peopled in a great part by the Malaccans, is governed by our ancient feudal laws. The inhabitants of Malacca, like our ancestors, are not agriculturists, but have like them a courage the most rash and determined*. Courage, therefore, is not, as some still

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oriental customs and government, there are no proverbs more similar than those of the Germans and the Chinese.

* If the Malaccans, says M. Poivre, had been nearer neighbours to China, that empire would have been soon conquered, and the form of its government changed. Nothing, says that author, equals the passion of the Malaccans for theft and plunder: but are they the only nation of thieves? Whoever reads history, finds, that this love of rapine is unhappily common to all men, and is founded on their idleness. They are better pleased, in general, to live by plunder and incursions, and by exposing themselves three or four months in the year to the greatest dangers, than be subject to the daily labour of agriculture. But why then are not all nations thieves? Because to plunder it is necessary to be situate near nations that have something to lose, that is, such as are agriculturists and rich: if not, they have no choice but to labour or starve.

assert,

Universally pleasing impression made by poetry.

assert, the effect of a particular organisation in the Europeans. Men resemble each other more than is commonly imagined. Where they differ it is in the degrees of their sensations. Poetry, for example, makes an agreeable impression on almost every one. Every one repeats with almost equal enthusiasm the hymn to light, that begins the third book of Paradise Lost; but, it will be said that, if this passage admired by all is equally pleasing to all, it is because in painting the magnificent effects of light, the poet makes use of a word, that by not expressing any particular degree of light, leaves every one at liberty to colour the objects with that tint of light which is most agreeable to his sight. Be it so: but if light did not make a strong and lively impression on all, would it be universally regarded as the most admirable object in nature? Does not that vortex of fire in which almost all nations have placed the throne of the Divinity, prove the uniformity of impressions received at the presence of the same objects*. Without this uniformity (which

Every country has it Malaccans. In the Roman catholic countries the clergy pillage, like them, the wealth of the harvest: and what the Malaccans take by violence, the priests get by cunning, and by a panic terror.

* To prove the differences of sensations produced by the sight of the same objects, people cite the example of painters, who give a tinge of yellow or grey to all their figures; but if this defect in their colouring were an imperfection in the organ of sight, and all objects really appeared to them tinged with yellow and

some

Different impressions produced by the pictures of nature.

some philosophers, not very accurate, have taken from the notion of the absolutely good and beautiful) on what foundation could the rules of taste have been established?

The simple and magnificent pictures of nature strike all men. But do those pictures make precisely the same impression on each of them? No: we learn, however, from experience, that the impressions are nearly similar; so that objects extremely pleasing to some are always more or less pleasing to others. It is in vain to repeat here that the uniformity of impresssions produced by the beautiful descriptions of poetry, is merely apparent; that it is in part the effect of the uncertain significations of words, and of latitude in the expressions* that corresponds exactly with the various sensations felt by the aspect of the same objects. Ad-

grey, the white on their pallet would appear so also, and they would paint white though they saw grey.

* If I should be asked again why there are in every language so many words of indeterminate signification, I should add to what I have said on this subject in the 5th chapter of this section, that want presided at the formation of languages; and that in the invention of words, men in endeavouring to communicate their ideas in the easiest manner, perceived, that if they made as many words as there are, for example, different degrees of magnitude, light, gravity, &c. their multiplicity would surcharge the memory: and that therefore it was necessary to suffer certain words to retain that vague signification, which renders their application more general, and the study of languages more concise.

General result of this chapter.

mitting the fact, it is still true, that there are works generally esteemed, and consequently rules of taste, the observation of which produces in all the sensation of beauty. If this question be thoroughly examined, it will appear from the different manner in which men are affected by the same objects, that the difference of impression arises more from their moral than their corporeal properties.

The result of this chapter is, that the diversity of tastes in men, supposes a small difference only in the degrees of their sensations: that the uniformity of their judgments, proved by the uniformity of the proverbs of different nations; by the resemblance of their laws and governments; by the taste that all have for poetry, and the simple and magnificent pictures of nature, demonstrate that the same objects make nearly the same impressions on all men; and that if they differ, it is only in the degrees of their sensations*.

* If nature, as has been supposed, gives men such unequal disposition to understanding or discernment, why in the arts of dancing, music, painting, do the scholars scarcely ever equal their masters ‡, and why does not the unequal disposition in nature overbalance in the pupils the small superior degree of attention that the masters perhaps exercise in the study of their art.

‡ This will scarcely be allowed. Raphael was the disciple of Perugino, a name that would have been long since forgotten, but for the transcendent accomplishments of the scholar. Many similar instances might be produced. T.

The difference of sensations has no influence on the understanding.

# CHAP. XIV.

## THE SMALL DIFFERENCE PERCEIVED BETWEEN OUR SENSATIONS, HAS NO INFLUENCE ON THE UNDERSTANDING.

MEN at the presence of the same objects can doubtless feel different sensations; but can they in consequence perceive different relations between these same objects? No: and supposing, as I have elsewhere said, that snow should appear to some a degree whiter than to others, they would still all agree that snow is the whitest of all bodies.

In order that men should perceive different relations between the same objects, those objects must excite in them impressions of a nature altogether peculiar. Wood on fire should freeze some, and water condensed by cold should burn others; all the objects of nature should offer to each individual a chain of relations altogether different; and in short, men should be with regard to each other what they are with regard to those insects whose eyes being constructed in a different manner, doubtless see objects under very different forms.

On

The difference of sensations has no influence on the understanding.

On this supposition individuals would have no analogy in their ideas and sentiments. Men could neither communicate their knowledge, nor improve their reason, nor labour in common on the immense edifice of arts and sciences. Now experience proves, that men every day make discoveries, and improve the arts and sciences; therefore they perceive the same relations between objects.

The enjoyment of a fine woman may excite in the soul of my friend an intoxication of delight that it does not produce in mine; but that enjoyment is in both him and me, the most poignant of all pleasures. When two men receive a stroke of the same power, they feel perhaps two distinct impressions: but if the violence of the blow be doubled, tripled, quadrupled, the pain that each of them feels will in like manner be doubled, tripled, quadrupled.

Suppose the difference of our sensations at the sight of the same object to be more considerable than it really is, it is evident, that the objects preserving the same relation to each other, would strike us with a constant and uniform proportion. But, it will be said, cannot this difference in our sensations change our moral affections, and cannot this change produce the difference and inequality in minds? I answer, that all diversity of affection* caused by any difference in the

* The only affections that have any sensible effect on the mind, are those that depend on education and prejudice.

bodily

The difference of sensations has no influence on the understanding.

bodily organisation, has not, as experience proves, any influence on the mind. We may therefore prefer either red or yellow, and still be, like d'Alembert and Clairaut, an equally great geometrician: our palates may be unequally delicate, and we may be equally good poets, painters, or philosophers. In short a person may, with a taste for sour or sweet, milk or anchovies, be an equally great orator, physician, &c. All these tastes in us are nothing more than unconnected and sterile facts. It is the same with regard to our ideas, till the moment they are compared with each other. Now to give ourselves the trouble of comparing them, we must be excited by some interest. But when men have this interest, and compare these ideas, why do they draw the same conclusions? Because, notwithstanding the difference of their affections, and the unequal perfection of their organs, they can all attain the same ideas. In fact, while the scale of proportions in which objects strike us, is not broken, our sensations constantly preserve the same relation to each other. A rose of a very dark colour, when compared with another rose, still appears dark to every eye. We make the same judgments of the same objects. We can therefore always acquire the same number of ideas, and consequently the same extent of understanding.

Men that are commonly well organized, are like certain sonorous bodies, that without being exactly the same

The difference of sensations has no influence on the understanding.

same, still yield the same number of sounds*. It results from what has been here said, that men always perceiving the same relations between the same objects, the unequal perfection of their senses has no influence on their understanding. Let us make this truth more striking by annexing a precise idea to the word Understanding.

* Certain bodies yield the same number of sounds, but not of the same kind. It is the same with the mind. It presents ideas or images equally fair, but different, according to the various objects with which chance has filled the memory.

Does my memory represent nothing but snow and ice, the tempests of the north, and the flames of Vesuvius or Hecla? With these materials what picture can I compose? That of the mountains that defend the entrance of the garden of Armida. But if my memory, on the contrary, presents none but smiling images, the flowers of spring, the silver waves, the mossy ground, and fragrant orange groves, what shall I compose with these delightful objects? The bower to which love carried off Renaud. The species therefore of our ideas, and our imaginations, does not depend on the nature of our mind, which is the same in all men, but on the sort of objects that chance has engraved on our memories, and the interest we have to combine them.

CHAP.

# CHAP. XV.

## OF THE UNDERSTANDING OR JUDGMENT.

WHAT is the understanding in itself? An ability to discern the resemblances and differences, the agreements and disagreements which different objects have with each other. But what is in man the productive principle of his understanding? His corporeal sensibility, his memory, and especially the interest he has to combine his sensations with each other.* The understanding or judgment is therefore in him nothing more than the result of the comparison of his sensations; and a good judgment or understanding consists in the justness of comparing them.

* Suppose that in each science and art, men had compared with each other all objects and all facts hitherto known, and that they had at last arrived at the discovery of all their several relations: men having then no new combinations to form, what we call judgment would no longer exist. Then all would be science, and the human judgment being obliged to remain inactive, till the discovery of new facts gave it opportunity of comparing and combining them with each other, would be like an exhausted mine that is suffered to repose till new veins are formed.

All

All men have an equal aptitude to understanding.

All men, it is true, do not feel precisely the same sensations, but all perceive objects in a proportion constantly the same: all therefore have an equal aptitude to understanding or judgment*.

In fact, if, as experience proves, every man perceives the same relations between the same objects; if all of them agree in the truths of geometry; if, moreover, no difference in the degrees of their sensations change their manner of beholding objects; if (to give a corporeal example) the moment the sun rises out of the bosom of the sea, all the inhabitants of the same

* It follows from this definition of the understanding, that if all its operations may be reduced to the observing the resemblances and differences, the agreements and disagreements which different objects have to each other, men are not, as has been often repeated, born with this or that particular genius.

The acquisition of various talents is in men the effect of the same cause; that is to say, the desire of glory, and the attention with which this desire endows them. Now attention can be equally applied to all matters, to poetry, geometry, physics, painting, &c. as the hand of the organist can be indifferently applied to each stop of the organ. If it be asked, why men have seldom different sorts of genius? I answer, it is because science is in each kind, the first matter of the judgment; as ignorance is, if I may so say, the first matter of folly; and that men have rarely two sorts of learning. There are few who join, like Buffon and d'Alembert, with the science of a Newton or an Euler, the difficult art of a good writer. I shall not therefore say, with the old proverb, man is born a poet, and becomes an orator; but I assert, on the contrary, since all our ideas come by the senses, that man is not born, but becomes what he is.

coast, struck at the same instant by the brilliancy of his rays, acknowledge him to be the most resplendent object in nature; it must be confessed, that all men form, or may form, the same judgments on the same objects; that they may acquire the same truths*, and, in short, that if all have not in fact equal judgment†, all have at least an equal capacity for it, that is, an aptitude to acquire it‡.

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* To acquire certain ideas, we must meditate. Is every one capable of it? Yes: when animated by a powerful interest. That interest then endows him with a force of attention, without which he may, as I have already said, be a learned man, but never a man of judgment. It is meditation alone that can reveal to us those first and general truths; the keys and principles of science. It is to the discovery of these truths that we always give the title of great philosopher; because, in every sort of science, it is always the universality of principles, the extent of their application, in a word, the greatness of the whole, that constitutes a philosophic genius.

† There are some, as I have before said, who attribute to the physical cause of the difference of latitudes, the difference in judgments. But to prove this fact, they must, after the definition here given of the judgment, be able to name a country, where the inhabitants do not perceive either the difference, the resemblance, the agreement, or disagreement of objects with each other, and with themselves. Now, such a country is hitherto unknown.

‡ It is because discernment is rare, that it is taken for a particular gift of nature. Alchymists, or jugglers, were extraordinary men, in the ages of ignorance: they were, therefore, taken for sorcerers, and supernatural beings. It was not, however, from the

I shall

All men have an equal aptitude to judgment.

I shall not insist any longer on this question, but content myself with repeating, on this head, an observation I have already made in the Treatise on the Mind.

If you present, I say, to several men a question that is simple and clear, and concerning the truth of which they are indifferent; they will all form the same judgment*, because, they all perceive the same relations

great difficulty of surprising and duping fools by illusion and dexterity. The astonishment in this matter, is, that men can make a serious occupation of such futile arts and illusions. Now, it is the same with the judgment; if the aptitude to have it be common, nothing is so rare as a strong and constant desire to attain it. There are, it is said, few men of genius: why? because there are few governments that proportion the reward to the labour that the acquisition of great talents is supposed to require.

In comparing alchymists and jugglers to men of discernment, my intention is not to degrade the latter by a humiliating comparison: I mean only to show the cause that has for such a long time past, caused discernment to be regarded as a gift of nature. I would destroy the marvellous, and not the merit of sagacity; to it we owe the improvements in medicine, surgery, and in every art and science that is useful. Nothing, therefore, on earth is more respectable than a sound judgment; and, consequently there is no nation rightly informed of its interest, that has not an esteem for judgment, in proportion to the utility of the art or science which it improves.

* If men differ in opinion concerning the same question, that difference is always the effect, either of their not understanding each other, or of their not having the same object present to their eyes, or their remembrance, or because being indifferent to the

between the same objects. All are, therefore, born with a just judgment. Now, it is with the term Just Judgment, as with that of Enlightened Humanity. Does this sort of humanity condemn an assassin to punishment? It is only occupied at that instant, with the preservation of an infinity of honest citizens. The idea of justice, and, consequently, of almost all the virtues, is, therefore, comprised in the extended signification of the word Humanity. It is the same with the words Just Judgment. This expression, taken in its extended signification, includes, in like manner, all the different sorts of judgments. Of this, at least, we may be assured, that if all in us be sensation and comparison of our sensations, there is no other sort of judgment than that which compares, and compares justly.

The general conclusion of what I have said of the equal aptitude, that men, commonly well organised, have to judgment, is that being once agreed,

That in men all is sensation;

That they do not think, or acquire ideas, but by the five senses;

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question itself, they employ but little attention in its investigation, and have but little regard to their judgment.

Now, supposing them compelled to attention, by a powerful and common motive, and that they understand each other, and have, moreover, the same object present to their eyes, or their memories; that I say, perceiving the same relations between the objects, they will form the same judgment: whence I conclude, that all have the same capacity of judgment, that is, an equal aptitude to it.

That

The judgment is not dependent on the organisation.

That the greater or less perfection in the five senses, in changing the degrees of their sensations, does not change the relations which objects have to each other.

It is evident, since the judgment consists in the knowledge of these same relations, that the greater or less superiority of the judgment is independent of the greater or less perfection in the organisation. For which reason, women, whose sense of feeling is more delicate than that of men, are not of superior intelligence. It is, I think, difficult to deny this conclusion.

But, they will say, if we regard the universal suffrage rendered to geometrical propositions, as a demonstrative proof, that all men, commonly well organised, perceive the same relations between the same objects; why not in like manner regard the difference of opinion in matters of morality, politics, and metaphysics, as a proof, that at least, in the latter sciences, men do not perceive the same relations between the same objects?

# CHAP. XVI.

## THE CAUSE OF THE DIFFERENCE OF OPINIONS, IN MORALITY, POLITICS, AND METAPHYSICS.

The progression of the human judgment is always the same. The application of the judgment, to this or that particular study, does not change that progression. If men perceive in certain sciences, the same relations between the same objects which they compare with each other, they ought necessarily to perceive the same relations in all. Observation, however, does not agree with this reasoning. But this contradiction is only apparent. Its true cause is easily discovered. In inquiring after it, we see for example, that if all men agree in the truth of geometrical demonstrations; it is, because they are indifferent to the truth or falsehood of those demonstrations;

Or because they not only annex clear ideas, but also the same ideas to the words employed in that science.

Or, lastly, because they have the same conception of a circle, a square, a triangle, &c.

On the contrary, in morality, politics, and metaphysics, if the opinions of men be very different,

It is, because, in these matters, they have not always an interest to see objects as they really are.

Or,

Ideas conveyed by the word good.

Or, because they have frequently only obscure and confused ideas of the questions on which they treat;

Or, because they more frequently follow the opinions of others, than their own;

Or, lastly, because they do not annex the same ideas to the same terms. I shall choose, for example, those of *good*, *interest*, and *virtue*.

## OF THE TERM GOOD.

Let us take this term in its utmost extent. To be satisfied if men can form the same idea of it, let us see how the child acquires it.

To fix his attention on this word, something sweet * is given him. The word taken in this most simple signification, is applied only to what pleases the child's taste, by exciting an agreeable sensation in his palate.

When a more extensive sense is given to the term, it is applied indifferently, to all that pleases the child, that is to an animal, a man, or his play-fellows. In general, so long as the expression is confined to corporeal objects, as, for example, a stuff, a tool, or an eatable, men form nearly the same idea of it; and the term recals to the memory, at least in a confined manner, the idea of what can be immediately good for them †.

* Sweetmeats are called in French, *bons bons* that is, good good.

† It is from the adjective *good*, that is formed the substantive

Different ideas of moral goodness.

When, in the last place, this term is taken in a still more extensive sense, and applied to morality, and the actions of men; we find, that it then necessarily includes the idea of some public utility, and to agree here about what is good, we must previously agree about what is useful. Now, the greatest part of mankind, do not even know that the general utility is the measure of the goodness of human actions.

For want of a sound education, men have nothing but confused ideas of moral goodness. The word goodness, employed by them in an arbitrary manner, recals to their remembrance only the various applications they have heard made of it (3); applications always different and contradictory, according to the diversity of interests and positions of those with whom they live. To come to an universal agreement respecting the signification of the word good, when applied to morals, it would be necessary to have a very judicious dictionary to fix the precise sense of it. Till

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*goodness*, which is taken by so many people for a real being, or, at least, for an inherent quality in certain objects. Can men be still so ignorant, as not to know that there is no being in nature named Goodness: that it is nothing more than a name given by man to what each one regards as good for himself, and, in short, that the word Goodness, like Greatness, is a vague expression, void of meaning, and that it presents no distinct idea, till the moment we necessarily, and without perceiving it, apply it to some particular object.

such

Ideas excited by the word interest.

such a work be digested, all disputes on this subject will be undeterminable. It is the same with the word Interest.

INTEREST.

Among mankind few are honest; the word Interest, must in consequence excite in most of them the idea of a pecuniary interest, or of some object equally mean and contemptible. Has a noble and elevated soul the same idea? No: this term recalls to his mind nothing but the sentiment of self-love. Virtue perceives nothing in interest, but the powerful and general spring, that source of action in all men, which carries them sometimes to vice, and sometimes to virtue. But did the jesuits annex to this word an idea equally extensive, when they opposed my opinion? I know not; but this I know, that being then bankers, merchants, and bankrupts, they ought to have lost sight of every idea of a noble interest; that this word could not excite in them any other idea, than that of intrigue and pecuniary interest.

Now so vile an interest compelled them to pursue a persecuted man. Perhaps they in secret adopted his opinions. As a proof of which they gave at Rouen, in 1750, an entertainment, whose design was to show, "that pleasure forms youth to true virtue." The first act displayed the civil virtues; the second, the warlike virtues; and the third, the virtues proper to religion. In this entertainment they proved this truth by dances.

Religion

Religion there personified, danced with Pleasure, for her partner; and to render Pleasure more endearing, said the Jansenist, the jesuits have put her on breeches*. Now, if pleasure, according to them, can operate all things in man, what cannot interest do with him! Is not all interest reducible in us to the search of pleasure†?

* We must do justice to the jesuits: this accusation is false. They are rarely libertines. The jesuit, restrained by his rules, and indifferent to pleasures, is totally devoted to ambition. His desire is to subdue the rich and powerful of the earth, either by force or fraud. Born to command, the great men of the earth are in his eyes but puppets, whom he moves at his pleasure, by the strings of direction and confession. He conceals his interior contempt of them by an outward respect. The great are contented with this, and are, without perceiving it, reduced to mere machines. What the jesuits cannot obtain by seduction, they accomplish by force. Look into the annals of history, and there you will see these same jesuits lighting up the torch of sedition in China, in Japan, in Ethiopia, and in every country where they have preached the gospel of peace. In England, we find, that they charged the mine which was to have blown up the parliament: that in Holland they assassinated the prince of Orange, and in France, Henry IV. that at Geneva they gave the signal for storming the city: that their hands are frequently armed with daggers, and but rarely employed in scholastic pleasures, and, in a word, that their faults are not those of weakness but of villainy.

† Why did the jesuits then rise up with such fury against me? Why do they go into all the great houses, exclaiming against the Treatise on the Mind, and forbid any one to read it, repeating incessantly, like father Canaye to marshal Hocquincourt, *No Mind, Gentlemen, no Mind?* It is because, being solely eager

Pleasures

All mankind are actuated by interest.

Pleasures and pains are the moving powers of the universe. God has declared them to be so to the earth, by creating heaven for the virtuous, and hell for the wicked. The Catholic church itself has agreed in this opinion, when, in the dispute between Mess. Bossuet and Fenelon, it decided, that we do not love God (4) for himself, that is, independent of those rewards and punishments, of which he is the disposer. They have, therefore, been always convinced, that man, actuated by the sentiment of self-love, constantly obeys the law of his interest*.

after command, the jesuits always desire to blind the people! In fact, were men rightly informed of the principle that keeps them silent, did they know that constantly directed in their conduct by an interest, either mean or noble, they always obey that interest! that it is to their laws, and not to their opinions, they owe their genius and their virtue: that with the forms of government of Rome and Sparta, Romans and Spartans might still be produced; and, in short, by a sagacious distribution of rewards and punishments, of glory and infamy, the interest of individuals may be always united with that of the public, and the people compelled to be virtuous; what method could then be taken to hide from the people the inutility, and even the danger of a sacerdotal power? Could they be long ignorant that the object, really important to the happiness of a nation, is not the creation of priests, but sagacious laws and judicious magistrates? The more clearly the jesuits have seen this principle, the more they have feared for their authority, and the more solicitous they have been to obscure the evidence of such a principle.

* Does the commander desire to advance himself? He wishes

What

Vague ideas of virtue.

What do the diversity of opinions on this subject prove? Nothing: except that men do not understand each other. They understand each other very little better when they talk about virtue.

VIRTUE.

This word frequently excites in the mind very different ideas, according to our state and situation, the society in which we live, and the age or the country in which we were born. If a younger brother, according to the custom of Normandy, should avail himself, like Jacob, of the hunger and thirst of the elder, to divest him of his right of primogeniture, he would be declared a cheat by all the tribunals. If a man, after the example of David, should cause the husband of his mistress to be sacrificed, he would be reckoned, not among the number of the virtuous, but of villains. It would be to little purpose, to say he made a good end; assassins sometimes do the same, but are never proposed as models of virtue.

Till precise ideas are fixed to this word, we may always say of virtue, as the Pyrrhonians said of the truth, "it is like the East, different, according to the "situation from which we behold it."

In the first ages of the church, the Christians were

for a war. But what in a war are the objects of the subaltern officer? An augmentation of 30l. or 40l. per annum, to his pay, the desire of laying empires waste, and of the death of those friends with whom he lives in intimacy, but who are superior in rank.

in

Notions of virtue entertained by the founders of christianity.

in dread of other sects; they were afraid of not being tolerated; what did they then preach? Indulgence and love of our neighbour. The word Virtue, then recalled to their minds the idea of humanity and gentleness. The conduct of their master confirmed them in this idea. Jesus was gentle with the Essenes, the Jews, and the Pagans; he bore no hatred to the Romans. He pardoned the Jews their injuries, and Pilate his injustice: he recommended charity to all. Is it so at this day? No: the hatred of our neighbours, and barbarity under the name of zeal and policy, are in France, Spain, and Portugal, now comprised in the idea of virtue.

The church in its infancy, whatever a man's religion might be, honoured his probity, and was little concerned about his belief. "He that is virtuous, is a christian, said St. Justin, though he be otherwise an Atheist." *Et quicumque secundum rationem et verbum vivere Christiani sunt, quamvis athei.*

Jesus, in his parables, preferred* the incredulous Samaritan to the devout Pharisee. St. Paul was scarcely more difficult than Jesus, and St. Justin. Cornelius is cited as a religious man, because he was honest (5).

* Jesus declares himself every where an enemy to the priests. He reproaches them every where with avarice and cruelty. Jesus was punished for his veracity. O Catholic priests, have you shewn yourselves less barbarous than the priests of the Jews, and can the sincere adorer of Jesus have less hatred for you?

Notions of virtue entertained by the founders of christianity.

Ch. x. ver. 2. of the Acts of the Apostles, though he was not yet a Christian. It is said in like manner of one named Lydia. Ch. xvi. ver. 14. of the same Acts, that she served God; though she had not then heard St. Paul, and was not converted.

In the days of Jesus, ambition and vanity were not reckoned among the virtues. The kingdom of God was not of this world. Jesus desired neither riches, nor titles, nor authority, in Judea. He commanded his disciples to forsake their goods, and follow him. What ideas have they now of virtue? There is no Catholic Prelate that does not cabal for titles and honours; no religious order that has not intrigues at court, that does not carry on commerce, and grow rich by its bank. Jesus and his apostles had no such ideas of honesty.

In the time of the latter, persecution did not bear the name of charity. The apostles did not instigate Tiberius to imprison the Gentiles or unbelievers. He who in that age would have compelled others to embrace his opinions, would have reigned by terror, erected a tribunal of inquisition, burned his brethren, and seized on their property, would have been held infamous. The sentences dictated by sacerdotal pride, avarice, and cruelty, would have been read with horror. In these days, pride, avarice, and cruelty, in the countries of the inquisition, are placed in the rank of virtues.

Jesus hated falsehood. He would not, therefore,

Different ideas of virtue entertained by the Monks.

like the church, have obliged Galileo, with a torch in his hand, to have retracted before the altar of the God of truth, those truths which he had discovered. The church is no longer an enemy to falsehood: pious frauds are canonised by it (6).

Jesus, the son of God, was humble (7), and his haughty vicar pretends to command sovereigns, to legitimate vice at his pleasure, and render assassins meritorious. He has beatified Clement. His virtue, therefore, is not that of Jesus.

Friendship, honoured as a virtue among the Scythians, is not regarded as such in a monastery. The rules of the latter even render it criminal (8). The old man sick and languishing in his cell, is deserted by friendship and humanity. If monks were enjoined a mutual hatred, they could not more faithfully observe it than in a cloister.

Jesus enjoined his disciples to render to Cæsar what was Cæsar's; he forbade to seize, by force or fraud, the property of another. But the word Virtue, which then implied justice, had no longer that signification, in the time of St. Bernard, when he ordained, at the head of the Croisades, that nations should forsake Europe to ravage Asia, to dethrone the Sultans, and break in pieces crowns, over which those nations had no sort of right.

When to enrich his order, that Saint promised a hundred acres in heaven, to those who would give ten upon earth: when, by that ridiculous and fraudulent promise

promise he obtained the lawful patrimony of a great number of heirs; the idea of robbery and injustice, must have been then included in the notion of virtue (9).

What other idea could the Spaniards form of virtue, when the church permitted them to attack Montezuma, and the Incas, to despoil them of their riches, and seat themselves on the thrones of Mexico and Peru? The monks, then masters of Spain, could have forced them to restore to the Mexicans and Peruvians (10) their gold, their liberty, their country, and their prince: they might at least have loudly condemned the conduct of the Spaniards. What did the theologians? remain silent. Have they at other times shown more justice? No: father Hennepin, the Franciscan, reports incessantly, that the only way to convert the savages is to reduce them to slavery*. Could a method so unjust and barbarous have been imagined by the Franciscan Hennepin, if the theologians of the present day had the same idea of virtue as Jesus? St. Paul expressly says, that persuasion is the only method to be used in converting the Gentiles. Who has recourse to violence to prove the truths of geometry? Who does not know that virtue recommends itself? In what case, therefore, ought prisons, tortures, and butcheries to be used? When they preach crimes, errors, and absurdities.

* See Description of the Manners of the Savages of Louisiana, page 105.

It

Intolerance of some of the professors of Christianity.

It was sword in hand, that Mahomet proved the truth of his dogmas. A religion, said the Christians, on this occasion, that permits man to compel the belief of man, is a false religion. They condemned Mahomet in their discourses, and justified him by their conduct. What they call vice in him, they call virtue in themselves. Could they believe that the Mussulman, so severe in his principles, was more gentle in his manners than the Catholics. Must the Turk be tolerant toward the Christian (11), the infidel, the Jew, and Gentile; and the monk, whose religion makes a duty of humanity, burn in Spain his brethren, and in France throw into prisons the Jansenist and the Deist?

Could the Christian commit so many abominations, if he had the same idea of virtue, as the son of God; and if the priest, obedient to the advice of his ambition only, were not deaf to that of the gospel? If to the word Virtue there had been annexed a clear, precise, and invariable idea (12), men could not have always had such different and extravagant ideas concerning it.

Interested spirit of religious bodies.

# CHAP. XVII.

## THE WORD VIRTUE, EXCITES IN THE CATHOLIC CLERGY NO OTHER IDEA THAN THAT OF THEIR OWN ADVANTAGE.

If almost all religious bodies, said the illustrious and unfortunate attorney-general of the parliament of Brittany, are by their institution animated with an interest, contrary to that of the public welfare, how can they form sound ideas of virtue? Among the prelates, there are few Fenelons (18), few that have his virtues, his humanity, and his disinterested spirit. Among the monks, may be counted, perhaps, a great many saints, but few honest men. Every religious body is greedy of riches and power: no bounds are set to their ambition *. A hundred ridiculous bulls, issued by the

* The humble clergy declare themselves to be the first body in the state: however, (as is observed by a man of much discernment) there are but three bodies absolutely essential to the administration: the first, is the body of magistrates, who are to defend my property against the usurpation of my neighbour. The second, is the body of the army, charged in like manner to defend my property against the invasion of foreigners. The third, is the body of the citizens, who, appointed to receive the revenues, furnish a main-

popes,

Ambition of the Romish church.

popes, in favour of the Jesuits, prove this fact. But if the Jesuits are ambitious, is the church less so? Let any one open its history: that is, the history of the errors and disputes of the fathers, the enterprises of the clergy, and the crimes of the popes: he will every where find the spiritual power an enemy to the temporal*, forgetting that its kingdom is not of this world, and

tenance for the two others. Now, to what purpose is the order of the clergy, more expensive to the state, than the three others put together? To maintain the morals of the people. But there are morals in Pennsylvania, and no clergy.

* The church by declaring itself the sole judge of what is, and what is not sin, has thought under that title to be able to assume the supreme jurisdiction. In fact, if no one has a right to punish a good action, and recompense one that is bad; a judge of their goodness or badness is the sole lawful judge of a nation: princes and magistrates are nothing more than the executioners of the sentences of others; their function is reduced to that of the hangman's. The project was great; it was covered with the veil of religion: it did not at first alarm the magistracy. The church was, in appearance, subject to their authority, and waited to deprive them of it, till it should be acknowledged the sole judge of the merit of human actions; that acknowledgment would universally legitimate its pretensions. What power could sovereigns have opposed to that of the church? No other than the force of arms. The people, then slaves to two powers, whose will and laws would have been frequently contradictory, must have waited till force had decided between them, which should be obeyed.

This project, I confess, has not been fully executed. But it is however true, notwithstanding the insignificant distinction of tem-

endeavouring continually, by fresh efforts, to possess himself of the riches and power of the earth, and not only to take from Cæsar that which is Cæsar's, but to attack him with impunity. If it were possible, that the superstitious Catholics could preserve any idea of just and unjust, they would be shocked, on reading such a history, and hold the sacerdotal power in horror.

Does a prince promise, in such a year, to suppress such a tax? Does the year pass over, and he boldly break his word? Why does not the church reproach him publicly, with the violation of his promise? Because, indifferent to the public welfare, to justice, and humanity, it is solely employed in promoting its own interest. If the prince be a tyrant, it absolves him. But if he be what they call a heretic, it anathematises, deposes, assassinates him. What, however, is this crime of heresy: the word, when pronounced by judicious and dispassionate men, signifies nothing more than a *particular opinion*. It is not from such a church that we must expect clear ideas of equity. The clergy will never give the title of virtuous, but to such actions as tend to the increase of its power and revenues. To what cause, but the interest of the priesthood, can we attribute the contradictory decisions of

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poral and spiritual, that in every Catholic State there are really two kingdoms, and two absolute masters over every inhabitant.

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the Sorbonne *? Without this interest, would they have maintained at one time, and tolerated at all times, the regicide doctrine of the Jesuits? Would they have concealed its odious nature? Would they have waited for the magistrate to point it out?

But in receiving that doctrine, they have shown more folly than villainy. That they are dolts, I agree: but can we suppose them to be honest, when we consider the fury with which they attack philosophical writings, and the silence they observe on those of the jesuits? By approving in their assembly, the morality of those religious †, either the doctors of the Sorbonne judge them to be sound (14), without examining them, (and, in that case, what opinion can we have of such stupid judges?) or, they judge them sound, after having examined them, and acknowledge them for such, (and, in that case, what opinion can we have of such ignorant judges? or, lastly, these doctors, after having examined them, and found them bad, approve them through fear (15), interest, or ambition, (and, in this last case, what opinion can we have of such knavish judges?)

* A striking collection, might be formed of the contradictory sentences issued by the Sorbonne, before and since Descartes, against almost every work of genius.——

† There are among these doctors men of learning and probity: but they are rarely made part of their assemblies; which are, as M. Voltaire observes, commonly composed of the dregs of the college.

Animadversions on the Sorbonne.

In a journal, entitled "Christianity, or, Religion avenged," if the theologian Gauchat, a hired declaimer against the most esteemed philosophers and writers of Europe, is always silent about what regards the Jesuits, it is, because he expects protection and preferment from them.

That interest constantly dictates the judgment of the theologians, is well known. The Sorbonnists have therefore no longer any pretensions to the title of moralists; they are even ignorant of its principles. The inscription on some dials, *Quod ignoro, doceo, I teach what I don't know*, should be the motto of the Sorbonne. Would they otherwise take for their guides to heaven, and to virtue, the favourers of Jesuitical morality? Let these doctors still exalt the excellence of the theological virtues. Those virtues are local; true virtue is reputed such in all ages, and all countries (16). The name of virtue should be given to such actions only, as are useful to the public, and conformable with the general interest. Has theology constantly kept the people from the knowledge of this sort of virtue? and has it always obscured in them the ideas of it? It is the effect of the interest of theology; and it is in conformity to this interest, that the priest has every where solicited the exclusive privilege of public instruction. The French comedians built a theatre at Seville; the chapter and vicar made them demolish it: Here, said one of the canons, our company will suffer no actors, but their own.

O'man!

Different notions attached to virtue at different times.

O man! cried an ancient sage, who can ever say how far thy folly and stupidity will carry thee? The theologian knows, laughs at it, and profits by it.——

It was ever the increase of their wealth and power that the theologians pursued under the name of religion *. We cannot be astonished therefore that their maxims change with their situation, that they have not now the same ideas of virtue as they formerly had, and that the morality of Jesus is not that of his ministers. It is not the Catholics only, but every sect and every people, that, for want of determinate ideas of probity, have had very different notions concerning it, according to the diversity of ages and countries (17).

* Why does every monk, who defends with a ridiculous zeal the false miracles of his founder, laugh at the attested existence of spectres? Because he has no interest to believe them. Take away interest, and there remains nothing but reason, and reason is not credulous.

Different ideas formed of virtue by different nations.

# CHAP. XVIII.

## OF THE DIFFERENT IDEAS THAT DIFFERENT NATIONS FORM OF VIRTUE.

In the East, and especially in Persia, celibacy is a crime. Nothing, say the Persians, is more opposite to the design of nature, and of the Creator, than celibacy*. Love is a corporeal want, a necessary secretion. Should any one by a vow of continence oppose the vow of nature? God, whogave us organs, does nothing in vain: it is his pleasure that we should use them.

Solon, the sagacious legislator of Athens, made little account of this monkish chastity (18). If in his laws, says Plutarch, he expressly forbids slaves to perfume themselves, and the love of young people, it is, adds the historian, that even in the Greek amours Solon did not see any thing dishonest. But those haughty republicans, who pursued without shame all sorts of amours, would not debase themselves by the vile profession of a spy or informer: they did not betray the interest of their country, or violate the property or liberty of their

* In Persia a lad no sooner attains the age of puberty than they give him a concubine.

fellow-

Different ideas formed of virtue by different nations.

fellow-citizens. A Greek or a Roman would not, without confusion, have received the fetters of slavery. The true Roman could not bear, without horror, even the sight of an Asiatic tyrant.

In the time of Cato the Censor, Eumenes came to Rome. At his arrival all the young people crowded round him; Cato alone shunned him (19). Why Cato, said they, do you avoid a sovereign so courted, so good a king, such a friend to the Romans? Let him be as good as he will, replied Cato, *every despotic prince is a devourer of human flesh* (20) *whom all virtuous men should avoid.*

It is in vain to attempt the enumeration of all the different ideas that different nations (21) and private persons (22) have had of virtue. We can only say, that a Catholic who has more veneration for the founder of an order of drones, than for a Minos, a Mercury, a Lycurgus, &c. has certainly no just idea of virtue. Now till precise ideas be annexed to this word, every man must form a different one according to the education which chance has given him.

A young girl is brought up by a stupid and bigoted mother. The girl understands by the word Virtue nothing but the exactitude with which the nuns fast, and recite their prayers. The word, therefore, excites no ideas in her but those of discipline, hair-cloth, and pater-nosters.

Another girl is brought up, on the contrary, by judicious and patriotic parents, who never give her any examples

examples as virtuous but such as are useful to our country; nor ever extol any character but such as Arria, Porcia, &c. This girl will necessarily have ideas of virtue very different from the former. The one will admire in Arria the force of virtue, and the example of conjugal love; the other will regard the same Arria as a Pagan, a woman of the world, a suicide, and devoted to damnation; one who ought to be shunned and detested.

Make the same experiment on two young men as on the two girls: let one of them be an assiduous reader of the lives of saints, and a witness, as it were, of the torments which the demon of the flesh makes them suffer; see them continually flogging themselves, rolling among thorns, feeding on women of snow, &c. He will have very different ideas of virtue from him who devoting himself to more noble and instructive studies, takes for his models such men as Socrates, Scipio, Aristides, Timoleon; and that I may come home to the age in which I live, Miron, Harley, Pibrac, and Barillon (23), "those respectable magis-"strates, those illustrious victims of a love of their "country, who by their wise and just maxims, dissi-"pated, says Cardinal de Retz, more factions than all "the gold of Spain and England could kindle." It is therefore impossible that the word virtue should not excite in us different ideas (24), according as we read Plutarch, or the Golden Legend. Thus, says Mr. Hume,

Hume, they have in every age and every country, erected altars to men of characters totally different.

Among the Pagans it was to Hercules, Castor, Ceres, Bacchus, and Romulus, that they rendered divine honours; but among the Mussulmans, as among the Catholics, it is to an obscure dervise, or a vile monk, in a word to a Dominic or an Antony, they decree the same honours,

It was after having destroyed monsters and punished tyrants; it was by their courage, their talents, their beneficence, and humanity, that the ancient heroes opened the gates of Olympus. But at this day it is by fasting, castigation, and poltroonery, by a blind submission and a vile obedience, that the monk opens the gate of Heaven.

This revolution in human minds, no doubt, struck Machiavel, so that he says in his fourth Discourse, "Every religion that makes a duty of sufferings and "humility, that inspires a people with a mere passive "courage; enervates their minds, debases their spirit, "and prepares them for slavery." The effect would doubtless have nearly followed the prediction, if, as Mr. Hume observes, the customs and laws of society had not modified the character and genius of religions.

We have seen in these two chapters, what indeterminate ideas are annexed to the words *good*, *interest*, and *virtue*. I have shown that these words, constantly employed in an arbitrary manner, excite, and ought to excite, different ideas according to the society in which

we live, and the application we propose to make of them. Whoever would discuss a question of this kind, should therefore first settle the signification of the words. Without this preliminary, every dispute of this nature will be indeterminable. Thus men on almost all questions of morality, politics, and metaphysics, understanding each other the less, the more they reason about them.

The words once defined, a question is resolved almost as soon as proposed: which proves, that all minds are just, and all perceive the same relations between the same relations between the same objects; a proof that in morality, politics, and metaphysics (25), the diversity of opinions is the mere effect of the uncertain signification of words, of the abuse that is made of them, and perhaps of the imperfection of languages. But what remedy is there for this evil?

CHAP.

# CHAP. XIX.

## THERE IS BUT ONE METHOD OF FIXING THE UNCERTAIN SIGNIFICATION OF WORDS; AND BUT ONE NATION THAT CAN MAKE USE OF IT.

To determine the uncertain signification of words, a dictionary should be composed, in which determinate ideas must be annexed to different expressions (26). This difficult work can be performed only among a free people. England is perhaps the only country in Europe from which the universe can expect and obtain this benefaction. But is ignorance there without a protector? There is no nation where some individuals have not an interest in mixing the darkness of falsehood with the light of the truth. The desire of the blind is that blindness should be universal; the desire of knaves, that stupidity should be extended, and dupes be multiplied. In England, as in Portugal, there are men great and unjust; but what can they do at London against a writer? There is no Englishman who, behind the rampart of his laws, cannot brave the power of the great, and laugh at their ignorance, superstition, and stupidity. The Englishman is born free; let him therefore

therefore profit by that liberty to enlighten the world; let him contemplate in the homage that is at this day rendered to the men of genius among the Greeks, what posterity will render to him; and let the prospect animate his endeavours.

This age, they say, is the age of philosophy: all the nations of Europe have produced men of genius in this science; all now seem occupied in the search after truth. But in what country can it be published with impunity? There is but one: which is England.

Englishmen*, make use of your liberty; of that gift which distinguishes the man from the vile slave and domestic animal, to dispense light to the nations of the earth! Such a benefaction will insure you their eternal acknowledgment. What applause can be refused to people virtuous enough to permit their writers to fix in a dictionary the precise signification of each word, and by that mean to dissipate the mysterious obscurity which still envelopes morality, politics, metaphysics, theology, &c, (27). It is reserved for the authors of such a dictionary to terminate so many disputes, eternised by the abuse of words (28); they alone can reduce the science of men to what they really know.

This dictionary, translated into all languages, would be the general collection of almost all the ideas of man-

* Every government, say the English, that forbids to think and to write on subjects of administration, is without dispute, a government of which no good can be said.

kind.

kind. Let precise ideas be annexed to each expression, and the school divine, who by the magic of words, has often thrown the world into confusion, will be a magician without power. The talisman, in the possession of which his ability consisted, will be broken. Then all those fools, who under the name of metaphysicians, have for so long a time wandered in the land of chimeras, and who, on bladders blown up by wind, traverse, in every direction, all the depths of infinity, will no longer say they see what they see not, and know what they know not; they will no longer impose on mankind. Then the propositions in morality, politics, and metaphysics, becoming as susceptible of demonstration as the propositions of geometry, men will all have the same ideas of those sciences, because all of them (as I have shewn) will necessarily perceive the same relations between the same objects.

A new proof of this truth is, that in combining nearly the same facts, either in the material world as is demonstrated by geometry, or in the intellectual world, as is proved by metaphysics, all men have, in all times, come to nearly the same conclusion.

Desire constitutes a great portion of happiness.

## CHAP. XX.

THE EXCURSIONS OF MEN, AND THEIR DISCOVERIES IN THE INTELLECTUAL KINGDOMS, HAVE BEEN ALWAYS NEARLY THE SAME.

AMONG the imaginary countries that the human mind runs over, that of the fairies, the genii, and enchanters, is the first where I shall stop. Mankind love fables: every one reads them, hears them, and makes them. A confused desire of happiness attends us with pleasure through the land of prodigies and chimeras.

With regard to chimeras, they are always of the same kind. All men desire riches without number, power without bounds, and pleasure without end; and this desire always flies before the possession.

How happy should we be, say the greatest part of mankind, if our wishes were fulfilled as soon as formed? O thoughtless man! can you be always ignorant, that a part of your felicity consists in the desire itself? It is with happiness, as with the golden bird sent by the fairies to a young princess: the bird settles at thirty paces from her; she goes to catch it, advances softly, is ready to seize it; the bird flies thirty paces further; she passes several months in the pursuit, and is happy

happy. If the bird had suffered itself to be taken at first, the princess would have put it in a cage, and in one week would have been tired of it. This is the bird of happiness, which the miser and coquette are incessantly pursuing. They catch it not, and are happy in their pursuit, because they are secure from disgust. If our desires were to be every instant gratified, the mind would languish in inaction, and sink under disquietude. Man must have desires; a desire new and easy to be gratified must constantly succeed to a desire fulfilled (29). Few men acknowledge that they have this want; it is, however, to a succession of their desires that they owe their felicity.

Continually impatient to gratify their wishes, men were incessantly building castles in the air; they would interest all nature in their happiness; but not being able to effect it, they addressed themselves to imaginary beings, to fairies and genii. If they suppose the existence of those beings, it is from a confused hope that by the favour of an enchanter they may become, as in the Thousand and One Nights, possessed of the marvellous lamp, and nothing will then be wanting to their felicity.

It is therefore a desire of happiness that produces a greedy curiosity, and the love of the marvellous, that amongst different people has created supernatural beings, which under the names of fairies, genii, sylphs, enchanters, &c. have always been the same beings, and by whom prodigies nearly the same have been

every where performed; which proves that in this kind the discoveries have been nearly similar.

PHILOSOPHICAL TALES.

The tales of this sort, more grave and important, though sometimes equally frivolous and less entertaining than the foregoing, have preserved among themselves the same resemblance. In the number of these tales, that are at once so ingenious and disgusting, I place the beauty of morality *, the natural goodness of men, and the several systems of the material world; of which experience alone ought to be the architect: if the philosopher consults it not, or has not the courage to stop where observation fails, when he thinks to make a system he makes nothing but a romance.

This philosopher, for the want of experiments, is forced to substitute hypotheses, and to fill up with conjectures the immense interval, which the present, and what is still more, past ignorance, have left in all parts of his system. With regard to hypotheses, they are almost all of the same kind. Whoever reads ancient philosophers will see that they almost all adopt nearly the same plan, and that where they differ, it is in the choice of the materials employed in the construction of the universe.

Thales saw but one element in all nature, which was

* The beauty of morality is only to be found in the paradise of fools, where Milton makes agni, scapularies, chaplets, and indulgences, incessantly whirl about.

the

the aqueous fluid. Proteus, the marine god, who metamorphosed himself into fire, a tree, water, and an animal, was the emblem of his system. Heraclitus discovered the same Proteus in the element of light; the earth appeared to him to be a globe of fire reduced to a state of fixity. Anaximenes made of the air an indefinite agent; it was the common parent of all the elements. The air condensed, formed water; still more dense, it formed earth. It was to the different degrees of the air's density that all beings owed their existence. They, who after the first philosophers assumed like them the office of architects of the palace of the universe, and laboured at its construction, fell into the same errors: Descartes is a proof.

It is by proceeding from fact to fact that we attain to great discoveries. We must advance in the train of experience, and never go before it. The impatience natural to the human mind, and especially to men of genius, cannot accommodate itself to a progress so slow (30), but always so sure; they would guess at what experience alone can reveal. They forget that it is on the knowledge of a first fact, from which all those of nature may be deduced, that the discovery of the system of the world depends; and that it is only by chance, analysis, and observation, that the first fact can lead to the general principle*.

* Our author writes here as if he were ignorant of the Newtonian system of the universe, founded on clear, undeniable experiments. But can that be possible? T.

Of religious tales.

Before men undertake to construct the palace of the universe, what materials should they draw from the mines of experience? It is at length time that all should labour in the structure of this fabric; and happy will they be to construct some detached parts of the projected edifice: the most assiduous disciples of experiments are sensible that without it they wander in the land of chimeras, where men in all ages have seen nearly the same phantoms, and have always embraced those errors, whose resemblance proves at once the uniform manner in which men of all countries combine the same objects, and the equal aptitude they have to discernment.

RELIGIOUS TALES.

These sort of tales, less amusing than the first, less ingenious than the second, and yet more respected, have armed nations against each other, have caused rivers of human blood to flow, and have filled the world with desolation. Under the title of Religious Tales, I comprehend in general all the false religions; these have always preserved among themselves the strongest resemblance.

Among the many various causes to which we may ascribe the invention of these tales (31), I cite the desire of immortality for the first. The proof, if we believe Warburton and some other learned men, that God was the author of the Jewish law, is, say they, that in the law of Moses there is no mention of rewards or punishments,

Of religious tales.

punishments, or the life to come, or consequently of the immortality of the soul. Now, they add, if the religion of the Jews had been of human institution, men would have made the soul immortal; a lively and powerful interest would have induced them to believe it such (32): this interest is their horror of death and annihilation. This horror would have been sufficient, without the aid of revelation, to have made them invent that dogma. Man would be immortal in his present state, and would believe himself so, if all the bodies that surround him did not every instant prove the contrary. Forced to yield to this truth, he has still the same desire of immortality. Eson's cauldron of rejuveniscence proves the antiquity of this desire. To make it perpetual, it was necessary to found it on some probability at least; to effect this, they made the soul of a matter extremely subtle; they supposed it an indestructible atom, that survived the dissolution of all the other parts, in a word, a principle of life*.

* The opinions of men, uninfluenced by revelation, concerning a future state, will ever be different, according to their different circumstances. The good man will readily believe it, for it is his interest that there should be a future state. The bad man will strive hard to disbelieve it, for he will think it his interest that there should not be a future state; but after many unsuccessful struggles his mind must remain in doubt and confusion; for it is impossible he should ever be certain that there is no future existence.

As a frequent reflection on futurity, attended with a firm be-

Of religious tales.

This being under the name of soul*, was to preserve after death all the affections of which it was susceptible during its union with the body. This system supposed, men doubted the less of the immortality of the soul, as neither experience nor observation could contradict such belief, for neither of them can form any judgment of an imperceptible atom. Its existence indeed was not demonstrated; but what proof do we want of what we wish to believe, and what demonstration is strong enough to prove the falsehood of a favourite opinion? It is true we never meet with any souls in our walks, and it is to shew the reason of this, that men, after having created souls, thought themselves obliged to create a country for their habitation. Each nation, and even each individual, according to his inclinations, and the particular nature of his wants, has formed a particular plan†. Sometimes the savage nations placed this ha-

lief of it, makes one of the most valuable enjoyments of the present life—ought not a man to rank those who would deprive him of that enjoyment, among the most pernicious of his enemies? T.

* The savages do not refuse a soul to any thing; their guns, their caldrons, or the materials of their buildings. See P. Hennepin, Voyage de la Louisiane, p. 94.

† The cursory reader will do well to remember, that all here said about a future state, relates merely to the different conjectures of different nations, and has nothing to do with what we are taught by revelation; but is brought to show, that in a work of imagination the human mind operates nearly in the same manner in all ages and all nations. T.

bitation

bitation in a vast forest, full of wild fowl, and watered with rivers stocked with fish : sometimes they placed it in an open level country, abounding in pasture ; in the middle of which rose a bed of strawberries as large as a mountain, different parts of which they portioned off, for the nourishment of themselves and their families.

People less exposed to hunger, and besides more numerous and better instructed, placed on this spot all that is delightful in nature, and gave it the name of Elysium. Covetous mortals formed it after the plan of the garden of Hesperides, and stocked it with trees, whose golden branches were loaded with fruits of diamonds. The more voluptuous nations placed in it trees of sugar and rivers of milk, and furnished it with delicious animals. Each people in this manner furnished the country of souls with what was on earth the object of their desires. Imagination, directed by different wants and inclinations, operated every where in the same manner, and consequently made but little variation in the invention of false religions.

If we believe the president de Brosse, in his excellent history of Fetichism, or the worship rendered to terrestrial objects, it was not only the first of religions, but its worship preserved to the present day in almost all Africa, and especially in Nigritia, was formerly the universal religion*. It is known, he adds, that in the

* If by catholic is to be understood universal, Popery does

Pierres Bœtites, it was Venus Urania they worshipped; that in the forest of Dodona the Greeks adored the oaks. It is also known that dogs, cats, crocodiles; serpents, elephants, lions, eagles, flies, monkies, &c. have had altars erected to them as gods, not only in Egypt, but in Syria, Phœnicia, and almost all Asia. We know also, that lakes, trees, the sea, and shapeless rocks, have, in like manner, been the objects of adoration of European and American nations. Now such an uniformity in the first religions, proves one still greater in the minds of men, as we still find the same uniformity in religions more modern or less gross. Such was the Celtic religion: the Mitras of the Parsees we find in the god Thor; Ariman in the Wolf; Feuria, the Apollo of the Greeks, in Baldar; Venus in Freia; and the Destinies in the three sisters Urda, Verandi, and Skulda. These three sisters are seated by the source of a fountain, whose waters lave the roots of a famous ash, named Yarasel; its branches shadow the earth, and its summit, that reached above the clouds, formed its canopy.

The false religions have therefore been almost every where the same. Whence arises this uniformity? From men's being animated by nearly the same interest, having nearly the same objects to compare to-

wrong to pretend to the title. The religion of Fetichism, and that of the Pagans, are those only that have been truly catholic.

gether

gether, and the same instrument, that is, the same judgment to combine them; they have therefore necessarily formed the same conclusions: it is, because, in general, all are proud; that, without any particular revelation, and consequently without proof, all regard man as the only favourite of heaven, and the principal object of its cares. May we not, after a certain monk, sometimes repeat, "What is a capuchin compared to "a planet."

Must we, to found the haughty pretensions of man on facts, suppose, as in certain religions, that the Divinity, forsaking heaven for earth, formerly came down to converse with mortals in the form of a fish, a serpent, or a man? Must we, to prove the interest which heaven takes in the inhabitants of the earth, publish books, in which, according to some impostures, are included all the precepts and duties that God requires of man?

Such a book, if we believe the Mussulmans, composed in heaven, was brought down to the earth by the angel Gabriel, and given by that angel to Mahomet. It is called the Koran. When we open this book, we find it capable of a thousand interpretations; it is obscure and unintelligible; yet such is human blindness, that they still regard as divine, a work in which God is painted under the form of a tyrant; where this same God is incessantly employed in punishing his slaves for not comprehending what is incomprehensible; in short, where this

this God, the author of phrases that are unintelligible without the commentary of an Iman, is properly nothing more than a stupid legislator, whose laws have constantly need of interpretation. How long will the Mussulmans preserve so much veneration for a work so filled with absurdities and blasphemies?

To conclude; if the metaphysics of false religions, if the excursions of human minds in the countries of souls, and the discoveries in the intellectual regions have been every where the same, let us further see if the impostures (33) of the sacerdotal bodies for supporting these false religions, have not in all countries preserved amongst themselves the same resemblances.

## CHAP. XXI.

### THE IMPOSTURES OF THE MINISTERS OF FALSE RELIGIONS.

In every country, the same motives of interest, and the same facts have combined to furnish sacerdotal bodies with the same means to impose on the people; and in every country the priests have made use of them*. A private person may be moderate in his

* In the Indies the priests annex certain virtues, and indulgences

desires,

desires, and content with what he possesses; a body is always ambitious: it constantly endeavours, with greater or less rapidity, to increase its power and wealth. The desire of the clergy has been in all times to be powerful and opulent*. By what method can it satisfy this desire? By the vending of hope and fear. The priests, wholesale dealers in these commodities, were sensible that the sale would be certain and lucrative; and that if hope supported the hawker who sold in the streets the chance of a great prize, and the quack who sold on a scaffold the chance of a cure, it would in like manner maintain the bonze, and talapoin, who sold in their temples the fear of hell and the hope of heaven: and if the quack made a fortune by vending one of these commodities only, that is hope, the priest must make a greater by selling both hope and fear. Man, said they, is timid; there will consequently be most got by the sale of the last article. But to whom shall we sell it? To the sinners. And to whom sell hope? To

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to extinguished fire brands, and sell them very dear. At Rome father Perpe, a jesuit, sold in like manner little prayers to the Virgin: he made hens swallow them, affirming, that they would make them lay their eggs better.

* What makes all doctrines plain and clear?
About two hundred pounds a year:
And that which was prov'd true before
Proved false again!—Two hundred more. T.
HUDIBRAS.

the

the penitents. Convinced of this truth, the priesthood considered that a great number of buyers supposed a great number of sinners; and that as the presents of the sick enriched the physician, offerings and expiations of sinners would enrich the priest; and therefore as sick people were necessary to one, sinners were to the other. The sinner would be constantly a slave to the priest; and by the multiplication of sins, which would promote the sale of indulgences, masses, &c. the power and riches of the clergy would increase. But if among the sins the priests counted those actions only that were really prejudicial to society, the sacerdotal power would be of little consequence; it would only extend to cheats and villains: now the clergy would have it extend to honest men also. To effect this it was necessary to create such crimes as honest men might commit. The priest therefore ordained that the least liberties between the two sexes, that the mere desire of pleasure, should be a sin. They moreover instituted a great number of superstitious ceremonies, and ordered every individual to obey them; declaring that the neglect of the observation of those ceremonies was the greatest of all crimes, and that the violation of the ritual law should be, as among the Jews, if possible, more severely punished than the most abominable villainy.

These rites and ceremonies, more or less numerous among the different nations, were every where nearly the same: they every where held sacred and secured

Methods by which the priests attain power and wealth.

secured to the priesthood the greatest authority over the several orders of the state (34).

There were however among the priests of different nations, some, who, more dexterous than others, exacted from the people not only the observance of certain ceremonies, but the belief of certain dogmas also. The number of these dogmas increased insensibly, and with them increased infidels and heretics*. What did the clergy then ? They ordained that heresy should be punished with the confiscation of property ; and this law augmented the riches of the church : they decreed moreover, that infidelity should be punished with death ; and this law augmented their power. From the moment the priests condemned Socrates, genius, virtue, and even kings themselves trembled before the sacerdotal power ; its throne was supported by consternation and panic terror : which spreading over the minds of the people the darkness of ignorance, became the unshaken props of pontifical power. When man is forced to extinguish the light of reason within him, and has no knowledge of what is just or unjust, it is then he consults the priest, and implicitly follows his counsels.

But why has not man recourse rather to the natural law ? The false religions themselves are founded on

* We say in Europe, God is in heaven : to say so in Bulgaria is heresy and impiety.

that

Virtue diminished by superstition.

that common basis. That I allow: but natural religion is nothing more than reason itself (35). Now how can a man believe in his reason when he is forbidden the use of it? Besides, who can perceive the natural law through the mysterious cloud with which the sacerdotal power surrounds it? This law, they say, is the canvas of all religions. Be it so; but the priests have embroidered so many mysteries on this canvas, that the embroidery entirely covers the ground. Whoever reads history will find that the virtue of the people diminishes in proportion as their superstition increases*. By what means can a superstitious man be instructed in his duty? How in the night of error and ignorance can he perceive the path of justice? In a country where all learning is confined to the priesthood, clear and just ideas of virtue can never be formed.

The interest of the priests is not that a man act virtuously, but that he do not think. *It is necessary*, say they, *that the son of man know little, and believe a great deal*†.

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* Superstition is still the religion of the wisest people. The English neither confess nor pray to saints; their devotion consists in not working or singing on a Sunday. A man who should play on a fiddle on that day would be reckoned impious: but he is a good Christian if he pass the day in a public house with wenches.

† The priests will not allow that God renders to every one according to his works, but according to his faith.

I have

Uniform means by which priests preserve their authority.

I have just shewn the uniform means by which the priests acquire their power; let us now see if the means by which they preserve it are not also uniform.

## CHAP. XXII.

### OF THE UNIFORMITY OF THE MEANS BY WHICH THE MINISTERS OF FALSE RELIGIONS PRESERVE THEIR AUTHORITY.

In every religion the first object proposed by the priests is to stifle the curiosity of mankind, and to prevent the examination of every dogma whose absurdity is too palpable to be concealed.

To attain this end, the human passions must be flattered: to perpetuate the blindness of men, they must be made to believe it is their interest, and consequently desire it. Nothing is more easy to a bonze. The practice of virtue is more troublesome than the observance of ceremonies. It is less difficult to kneel before an altar, to offer a sacrifice, to bathe in the Ganges (36), and eat fish on Fridays, than to pardon, like Camillus, the ingratitude of our fellow-citizens; to spurn at riches like Papirius; or to instruct mankind like Socrates: let us therefore flatter, says the bonze,

Uniform means by which priests preserve their authority.

bonze, the human vices, that those vices may be our protectors; let us substitute in the place of virtue, offerings and expiations, that we may, by certain superstitious ceremonies, cleanse the foul soul from the blackest crimes. Such a doctrine could not fail to increase the riches and authority of the bonzes. They saw all the importance of this doctrine; they made it public, and the people received it with joy: for the priests were constantly more loose in their morals, and more indulgent to crimes, in proportion as they were more severe in their discipline, and more rigid in punishing the violation of ceremonies*.

Every temple then became an asylum for villains; incredulity alone found there no refuge. Now as there are in all countries but few unbelievers, and many villains, the interest of the greatest number was to agree with the priests.

Between the tropics, says a navigator, there are two islands opposite each other: in the one, no man is reckoned honest who does not believe in a certain number of absurdities, and unless he be able to endure the greatest itching without scratching: it is to the patience with which they support their prurience that virtue is principally ascribed. In the other isle, no belief is imposed on the inhabitants, and they may

* If the catholics be in general without morals, it is because the priests of the popish religion have constantly substituted superstitious ceremonies, for the practice of real virtues.

scratch

scratch where they itch, or even tickle themselves till they laugh; but no one is reckoned virtuous who does not perform actions useful to society. Must not the people discern the absurdity of this religious morality? I answer, a priest, wrapt up in a solemn vestment, affecting an austere manner, and obscure language, and speaking only in the name of God and religion, deludes the people by the eyes and ears; and though the words morality and virtue are in his mouth void of meaning, it imports little: those words pronounced in a mortified tone, and by a man in the habit of penitence, always impose on human imbecility.

Such were the tricks, and if I may so say, the splendid mummery, under which the priests concealed their ambition and personal interest. Their doctrine was moreover severe in certain respects, and that severity served still more to deceive the vulgar. It was the box of Pandora that glittered without, but within were fanaticism, ignorance, superstition, and all those evils that have successively ravaged the earth. Now I ask, when we see the ministers of false religions in all ages employ the same means to increase their wealth and power*, to preserve their authority, and multiply

* If the priests make themselves every where the depositaries and the distributors of charities, it is that they may appropriate a part of them, and by the distribution of the rest keep the poor in their pay. Every method of acquiring money and authority appears lawful to the priesthood. It is without blushing that the cathe

The belief of men of genius in the fables of Paganism accounted for.

the number of their slaves; when we find in every country the same absurdities in false religions, the same impostors in their ministers, and the same credulity in the people (37), if it be possible to imagine that there is essentially between men that inequality of understanding which some suppose?

But supposing understanding and talents to be the effects of a particular cause, how can we persuade ourselves that men of great abilities, and consequently endowed with that particular organization, could have believed the fables of Paganism, have adopted the opinions of the vulgar, and sometimes become martyrs to the most palpable errors? Such facts, which are inexplicable if we suppose the understanding to be the product of organization, become simple and clear when it is regarded as an acquisition. We do not then wonder that men of genius, in certain matters, should have no superiority in those sciences or questions they have never studied. On this supposition, all the advantage a man of discernment can have over others, (and a considerable advantage it certainly is), results from a habit of attention, and a knowledge of the best methods to be taken in the examination of a question; an ad-

tholic clergy charge the repairs of the churches to those very people whose wealth they have exhausted. The churches are the farms of the clergy; but, contrary to opulent landlords, they find the means of making others support them.

vantage

Conclusions deduced from this chapter.

vantage that is useless when not employed in the search of that particular truth.

The uniformity of frauds (38) employed by the ministers of the false religions, the resemblance of the phantoms seen by them in the intellectual regions (39), and the equal credulity of the people, prove therefore that nature has not given to men that unequal portion of judgment which has been supposed; and that in morality, politics, and metaphysics, if they form very different judgments of the same objects, it arises from their prejudices and the indeterminate significations that are annexed to the same expressions.

I shall only add, that if judgment be reduced to the science or knowledge of the true relations which objects have to each other, and that if whatever be the organization of individuals, that organization as is demonstrated by geometry, makes no change in the constant proportions with which objects strike them, it necessarily follows that the greater or less perfection of the organs of the senses, can have no influence over our ideas, and that all men organized in the common manner will consequently have an equal aptitude to judgment or understanding. The only method remaining to render this truth more evident, if that be possible, is to fortify the proofs by augmenting them. Let us attempt this by another series of propositions.

Every truth is reducible to a fact.

## CHAP. XXIII.

### THERE IS NO TRUTH NOT REDUCIBLE TO A FACT.

ALMOST all philosophers agree, that the most sublime truths once simplified and reduced to their plainest terms, may be converted into facts, and in that case present nothing more to the mind than this proposition, *white is white, and black is black* (40). The apparent obscurity of certain truths lies not therefore in the truths themselves, but in the confused manner of representing them, and the impropriety of the words used in expressing them. Can they be reduced to simple facts? If every fact can be equally well perceived by every man organized (41) in the common manner, there is no truth which he cannot comprehend. Now if all men can conceive the same truths, they must all have essentially the same aptitude to understanding.

But is it quite certain that every truth may be reduced to those clear propositions above-mentioned? I shall add only one proof to what the philosophers have already given: I deduce it from the perfectibility of the human mind or understanding; experience demonstrates

All men have equal capacity for perceiving truths.

strates that the understanding is capable of it. Now what does this perfectibility suppose? Two things:

The one, that every truth is essentially comprehensible by every mind.

The other, that every truth may be clearly represented.

The capacity that all men have to learn a trade proves this. If the most sublime discoveries of the ancient mathematicians are at this day comprised in the elements of geometry, and are understood by every student in that science, it is because those discoveries are reduced to facts.

Truths being once brought to this point of simplicity, if there be some among them that men of ordinary capacity cannot comprehend, it is then, they may say, that borne up by experience, like the eagle, who alone among the feathered race can soar above the clouds and gaze upon the sun, the man of genius alone can raise himself to the intellectual regions, and there sustain the resplendence of a new truth. Now nothing is more contrary to experience. Does a man of genius discover a truth, and represent it clearly? At the instant all men of ordinary capacity seize it, and make it their own. The genius is an adventurous chief, who penetrates the region of discoveries: he lays open the road, and men of common capacity rush in crouds after him. They have therefore the force necessary to follow him, otherwise genius would there penetrate

Period when the highest truths are attainable by common minds.

alone. Now to the present day its only privilege is to make the first track*.

But if there be a period when the highest truths are attainable by common minds, when is that period? When freed from the obscurity of words, and reduced to propositions more or less simple, they pass from the empire of genius to that of the sciences. Till then, like those souls who are said to wander in the celestial abodes, waiting till they can animate a body, and appear before the light, the truths yet unknown wander in the regions of discoveries, waiting for some genius to seize, and transport them to this terrestrial sphere. Once descended to the earth, and perceived by superior minds, they become common property.

If in this age, says M. Voltaire, men commonly write better in prose than in the last age, to what do the moderns owe this advantage? To the models they have before them. The moderns could not boast of this superiority, if the genius of the last age, already converted into science (12), had not, if I may so say, entered into circulation. When the discoveries of genius are metamorphosed into sciences, each discovery deposited in their temple becomes a public property; the temple is open to all. Whoever desires to learn,

* It seems to follow from this paragraph, that every man who will, may understand all the truths in the sublime science of geometry and the depths of fluxions, provided they be properly explained.

learns,

The highest discoveries in art and science comprehensible to all.

learns, and is sure to make nearly so many feet of science per day. The time fixed for apprenticeship is a proof of this. If the greatest part of arts, at the degree of perfection to which they are now carried, may be regarded as the produce of the discoveries of a hundred men of genius placed end to end; to exercise those arts it is necessary therefore that the workman unite them in himself, and know how properly to apply the ideas of those hundred men of genius: what can be a stronger proof of the perfectibility of the human mind, and of its aptitude to comprehend every sort of truth?

If from the arts I pass to the sciences, it will be equally apparent that the truths, whose discoveries formerly deified their inventor, are now quite common. The system of Newton is taught every where.

It is with the author of a new truth as with an astronomer, whom curiosity or the desire of glory calls up to his observatory. He points his glass to the heavens, and in the immensity of space beholds a new star or satellite. He calls his friends; they go up, and looking through the telescope, behold the same star: for with organs nearly the same, men must discover the same objects.

If there were ideas that ordinary men could not attain, there would be truths discovered in the process of ages, that could not be comprehended but by two or three men equally organized. The rest of the human race would be subject in this respect to an invincible

vincible ignorance. The discovery of the square of the hypothenuse being equal to the square of the other two sides of a triangle, could not be known but to another Pythagoras: the human mind could not be susceptible of perfectibility; in a word, there would be truths reserved for certain men only. Experience, on the contrary, shews us, that the most sublime discoveries, clearly represented, are conceivable by all. Hence arise that astonishment and shame we perceive when we say, *there is nothing more plain than that truth; how was it possible I did not perceive it before?* This is doubtless sometimes the language of envy, as in the case of Christopher Columbus. When he departed for America, the courtiers said, *nothing is more ridiculous than such an enterprise:* and at his return, *nothing was more easy than such a discovery.* Though this be frequently the language of envy, is it never that of the heart? Is it not with the utmost sincerity, when suddenly struck by the evidence of a new idea, and presently accustomed to regard it as trivial, that we think we always knew it?

If we have a clear idea of the expression of a truth, and not only have it in our memory, but have also habitually present to our remembrance all the ideas of the comparison from which it results, and if we be not blinded by any interest or superstition, that truth being presen ly reduced to the plainest terms, that is, to this simple proposition, that *white is white, and black is black,* is conceived almost as soon as proposed.

In

An ordinary understanding sufficient to discover unknown truths.

In fact, if the systems of Locke and Newton, without being yet carried to the last degree of perspicuity, are nevertheless generally taught and understood, men of a common organization can therefore comprehend the ideas of those of the greatest genius. Now to conceive their ideas (43), is to have the same aptitude to understanding. But if men can attain those truths, and if their knowledge in general be constantly in proportion to the desire they have to learn, does it follow that all can equally attain to truths hitherto unknown? This objection deserves to be considered.

## CHAP. XXIV.

### THE UNDERSTANDING NECESSARY TO COMPREHEND THE TRUTHS ALREADY KNOWN, IS SUFFICIENT TO DISCOVER THOSE THAT ARE UNKNOWN.

A TRUTH is always the result of just comparisons of the resemblances or differences, the agreements or disagreements, between different objects. When a master would explain to his scholars the principles of a science, and demonstrate the truths already known, he places before their eyes the objects of the comparison from which those truths are to be deduced.

But

Reason why few persons discover unknown truths.

But when a new truth is to be sought, the inventor must in like manner have before his eyes the objects of comparison from which that truth is to be deduced: But what shall present them to him? Chance; the common mother of all inventions. It appears therefore, that the mind of man, whether it follow the demonstration of a truth, or whether it discover it, has in both cases the same objects to compare, and the same relations to observe; in short, the same operations to perform*. The understanding necessary to comprehend truths already known, is therefore sufficient to discover those that are unknown. Few men indeed attain the latter; but this is the effect of the different situations in which they are placed, and that series of circumstances to which is given the name of chance; or of the desire, more or less cogent, that men have to distinguish themselves, and consequently their greater or less passion for glory.

* I might even add, that it requires more attention to follow the demonstration of a truth already known, than to discover one. Suppose for example, it be a mathematical proposition; the inventor in this case is already acquainted with geometry: he has its figures habitually present to his memory; he recollects them, as it were, involuntarily; and his attention is solely employed in observing their relations. With regard to the scholar, those same figures not being habitually present to his memory, his attention is necessarily divided between the trouble of recollecting the figures, and of observing their relations.

The

Influence of the passions in sharpening the understanding.

The passions can do all things. There is no girl so stupid that love will not make witty. What means does it not furnish her with, to deceive the vigilance of her parents, to see and converse with her lover? The most stupid frequently become the most inventive.

A man without passions is incapable of that degree of attention to which a superior judgment is annexed: a superiority that is, perhaps, less the effect of an extraordinary effort than of habitual attention.

But if all men have an equal aptitude to understanding, what can produce that difference we find between them?

# NOTES.

1. (page 132.) IF men, and especially the Europeans, say the Banians, always in fear and mistrust of each other, are ever ready to go to war with one another; it is because they are still animated with the spirit of their first parents, *Cutteri* and *Toddicastrée*. This *Cutteri*, who was the second son of *Pourous*, and destined by God to people one of the four quarters of the earth, turned his steps toward the west. The first object he met was a woman named *Toddicastrée*. She was armed with a *chuchery*, and he with a sword. As soon as they perceived each other, they attacked and fought together for two days and a half: the third day, tired with the combat, they parlied, they loved, married, and lay together: they had children, that, like their progenitors, are always ready to attack when they meet.

2. (p. 139.) That the most witty and the most thoughtful are sometimes melancholy, I allow; but they are not witty and thoughtful because they are melancholy, but melancholy because they are thoughtful. In fact, it is not to his melancholy but to his wants that a man owes his discernment: want alone draws him from his natural indolence. If I think, it is not because I am strong or weak, but because I have more or less interest to think. When they say of misfortune that it is the *great teacher of man*, they say nothing more than that misfortune, and the desire to be freed from it, oblige us to think. Why does the desire of glory frequently produce the same effect? Because glory is to some a want. Moreover, neither Rabelais, nor Fontenelle, nor Fontaine, nor Scarron were esteemed melancholic, yet nobody denies their superiority of wit, greater or less.

3. (p. 184.) What I here say of goodness may be equally applied to beauty. The different ideas we form of it arise, almost always,

always, from the explanations we have heard given of the word in our infancy. When we have heard a woman of a particular figure constantly extolled, that figure is fixed in our mind as a model of beauty: and we always judge of other women according to the greater or less resemblance they have to that model. Hence the diversity of our tastes, and the reason why we prefer a woman of an elegant shape, to one that is gross, and who is preferred by another.

4. (p. 187.) This decision of the church shows the absurdity of a judgment that has been passed on me. How, it has been said, can I maintain that friendship is founded on want and a reciprocal interest? But if the church, and the Jesuits themselves agree, that God, though all good and powerful, is not beloved for himself; is it then without some private reason that I love my friend? Now of what nature can this reason be? It is not of the sort that produces hatred; that is a sentiment of trouble and grief; on the contrary, it is of the nature of those that produce love, that is, a sentiment of pleasure. The judgments that have been passed on me relative to this matter are so absurd, that it is not without shame I here reply to them.

5. (p. 189.) The primitive church did not cavil with mankind about their belief: Synesius is a proof of this. He lived in the fifth century; and was a Platonic philosopher. Theophilus, then bishop of Alexandria, desirous of doing himself honour by a conversion, entreated Synesius to be baptized by him. The philosopher consented on condition that he should preserve his opinions. A short time after, the inhabitants of Ptolemais asked Synesius for their bishop. Synesius refused the episcopacy, and his reasons for it he gives in his hundred and fifth letter to his brother. "The "more I examine myself, he says, the less I find that I am pro- "per to be a bishop. I have hitherto divided my life between "the study of philosophy and amusement. When I go out of "my closet, I give myself up to pleasure. Now it is not right, they "say, that a bishop be joyous: he is a divine man. I am be-

"sides

"sides incapable of all application to civil and domestic affairs. "I have a wife that I love, and it is equally impossible for me, "either to quit her, or only see her in secret. This Theo- "philus knows; but this is not all. The mind cannot quit the "truths that have been demonstrated to it. Now the dogmas of "philosophy are contrary to those which a bishop ought to "teach. How can I preach the creation of the soul after the "body, the end of the world, the resurrection, and in short "things that I do not believe? I cannot bring myself to be a "hypocrite.

"A philosopher, they say, can accommodate himself to the "weakness of the vulgar, and conceal those truths he cannot "believe. Yes; but in that case dissimulation must be abso- "lutely necessary. I would be a bishop if I could preserve my "opinions and talk of them with my friends; and if, to keep the "people in their errors, they would not force me to entertain "them with fables. But if a bishop must preach the contrary to "what he thinks, and think with the people, I shall refuse the "episcopacy. I do not know if there be truths that ought to be "kept from the vulgar; but I know, that a bishop ought not to "preach the contrary of what he believes. The truth ought to "be respected as the Divinity, and I protest before God that I "will never falsify my sentiments in my preachings." Synesius, notwithstanding his repugnance, was ordained a bishop, and kept his word. The hymns he composed are nothing more than the expositions of the systems of Pythagoras, Plato, and the Stoics, adjusted to the dogmas and worship of the Christians.

6. (p. 191.) Pious calumny is also a virtue of new creation. Rousseau and I have been its victims. How many passages of our works have been falsely cited in the mandates of the holy bishops? There are therefore new holy calumniators.

7. (ibid.) The clergy who call themselves humble, resemble Diogenes, whose pride was seen through the holes in his cloak.

8. (ibid.) Read on this subject the last chapters of the rules of

of St. Benedict; you will there see that if the monks be obdurate and wicked, it is what they cannot help being.

The generality of men, assured of their subsistence, and without concern on that account, become insensible: they do not deplore in others the evils they cannot suffer. Besides, the happiness or misery of a monk, confined in a cloister, is entirely independent of that of his relations and fellow-citizens. The monks therefore must regard men of the world with the same indifference as a traveller regards the beasts he meets in a forest. It is the monastic laws that condemn the religious orders to inhumanity. In fact, what is it that produces in men the sentiment of benevolence? The assistance, either remote or near, that they may afford each other. This is the principle that unites men in society. Do the laws estrange my interest from that of the public? From that moment I become wicked. Hence the severity of arbitrary governments, and the reason why monks and despots are in general the most inhuman of men.

9. (p. 192.) It was formerly believed that God, according to the difference of times, could have different ideas of virtue; the church has clearly explained this doctrine in the council of Bâle, held on account of the Hussites; who having protested against admitting any doctrine that was not contained in the scriptures; the fathers of the council informed them, by the mouth of cardinal Casan. "That the scriptures were not absolutely necessary to the "preservation of the church, but only to its better regulation: that "they should be always interpreted according to the present state "of the church, which by changing its sentiments obliges us to be-"lieve that God changes his also."

10. (ibid.) They boast much of the restitutions that religion causes to be made. I have sometimes seen the restitution of copper, but never of gold. The monks have not yet restored the heritage, nor the catholic princes the kingdoms that have been ravished from the Americans.

11. (p. 193.) It is but justice to arm intolerance against intole-

rance, as a prince ought to oppose an army against the army of his enemy.

12. (p. 193) On opening the Encyclopedia at the article *Virtue* how was I surprised to find, not a definition of virtue, but a declamation on the subject. *O man!* cries the composer of that article, *wouldst thou know what is virtue? Enter into thyself. Its definition is at the bottom of thy heart.* But why was it not in like manner at the bottom of the composer's heart, and if it were there, why did he not give it us? Few authors, I confess, think so highly of their readers, and so meanly of themselves. If that writer had reflected more on the word Virtue, he would have perceived, that it consisted in the knowledge of what men owe to each other, and that it consequently supposes the formation of societies. Before this formation, what good or evil could be done to a society not yet existing? A man of the woods, a man naked and without language, might easily acquire a clear idea of strength or weakness, but not of justice and equity.

A man born in a desert island, and abandoned to himself, would live there without vice or virtue. He could not exercise either of them. What then are we to understand by the words Virtuous and Vicious? Actions useful or detrimental to society. This idea, clear and simple, is, in my opinion, preferable to all obscure and inflated declamations on virtue.

A preacher, who in his sermons gives no clear definition of virtue; a moralist, who maintains that all men are good, and does not believe any of them unjust, is sometimes a fool, but more frequently a knave, that would be thought honest merely because he is a man.

To pretend to draw a faithful portrait of humanity, perhaps a man should be virtuous, and, to a certain point, irreproachable.

What I know of the matter, is, that the most honest are not they who suppose men to have the most virtue. If I would be well assured of mine, I would suppose myself to be a citizen of Rome, or of Greece; and I would ask myself, whether in the situation of

Codrus

Codrus or Regulus, Brutus or Leonidas, I should have done the same actions. The least hesitation in this case would teach me that I was but weak in virtue. Of every sort the strong are rare, and the lukewarm common.

13. (p. 194.) The humanity of M. Fenelon, is renowned. One day, a vicar boasted, in his presence, of having abolished dancing on a Sunday, in his village. Mr. Vicar, said the archbishop, let us be less severe towards others; let us abstain from dancing ourselves, but let the peasants dance if they like it. Why should we not let them for a short time forget their misery? Fenelon, just, and always virtuous, lived a part of his days in disgrace. Bossuet, his rival in genius, was less honest, and always in favour.

14 (p. 197.) The morality of Jesus, and that of the Jesuits, have nothing in common; the one is destructive of the other. This is evident, by the extracts that the parliaments have given. But why do the clergy incessantly repeat, that the same stroke has destroyed the Jesuits and religion? It is, because, in the ecclesiastical language, religion and superstition are synonimous. Now superstition, or the papal power, has, perhaps, really suffered by the banishment of that order.

For the rest, let not the Jesuits flatter themselves, that they will ever be recalled into France and Spain. It is known by what proscriptions their recal would be followed, and to what excess the cruelty of an enraged Jesuit is carried.

15. (ibid.) The fear with which the Jesuits were regarded, seemed to have set them above all attack. To brave their hatred and their intrigues, such men as Chauvelin were necessary, noble souls, generous citizens, and friends to the public. To destroy such an order, courage alone was not sufficient; genius was also requisite. It was necessary to show the people the poignard of the regicide, wrapped up in the veil of respect and devotion: to discover the hypocrisy of the Jesuits through the cloud of incense which they spread around the throne and the altars; to embolden the timid prudence of the parliaments, and make them clearly distinguish between the extraordinary and the impossible.

NOTES ON SECTION II.

16. (p. 198.) It is with the judgment as with virtue. The judgment applied to the various sciences of geometry, physics, &c. is judgment in all countries. The judgment, when applied to the false sciences of magic, theology, &c. is local. The first of these, is to the other what the money of Africa, the shells called cowries, is to the gold and silver money, the one has circulation among some Negro nations, the other over the whole earth.

17. (p. 199.) On what should we establish the principles of a good morality? On a great number of facts and observations. It is, therefore, to the premature formation of certain principles, that we ought, perhaps, to attribute their obscurity and falsity. In morality, as in all other sciences, what should be done before we form a system? Collect the materials necessary for the construction. We cannot now be ignorant, that an experimental morality, founded on the study of men, and of things, as far surpasses a speculative and theological morality, as experimental philosophy exceeds a vague and uncertain theory. It is because religious morality never had experiment for its basis, that the theological empire was ever regarded as the region of darkness.

18. (p. 200.) The monks, themselves, have not always held chastity in equal esteem. Some of them, called *Mamillares*, have held, that a man might, without sin, feel the bosom of a nun. There is no act of lasciviousness, that superstition has not in some part made an act of virtue. In Japan, the Bonzes may love men, but not women. In certain cantons of Peru, the acts of the Greek loves were acts of piety; it was an homage to the gods, and rendered publicly in their temples.

19. (p. 120.) Mrs. Macaulay, the illustrious author of a History of England, is the Cato of London. "Never, says she, has the "view of a despotic monarch, or prince, soiled the purity of my "looks."

20. (Ibid.) It is an absurdity common to all nations, to expect humanity and science in their tyrant. To attempt to make good scholars, without punishing the idle, and rewarding the diligent,

is

is a folly. To abolish the law that punishes theft and murder, and require that men should not steal or murder, is a voluntary contradiction. To desire that a prince should apply himself to the affairs of the state, and that he should have no interest to apply himself to them, that is, that he should not be punished, if he neglect them: to desire, in short, that a man above the law, that is without law, should be always humane and virtuous, is to desire an effect without a cause. Cast men bound into the den of a tyger, and he will devour them. The despot is the tyger.

21. (p. 201.) The Calmucks marry as many wives as they please; they have besides, as many concubines as they can maintain. Incest is no crime among them. They see nothing more in a man and a woman, than a male and a female. A father without scruple marries his daughter: no law forbids it.

22. (ibid.) Every one says, I have the most just ideas of virtue: whoever does not think as I do, is wrong. Every one laughs at his neighbour. Every one points with his finger, and never laughs at himself but under the name of another. The same inquisitor who condemned Galileo, doubtless, condemned the wickedness and stupidity of the judges of Socrates: he did not think that he should one day be like them, the scorn of his own age, and of posterity. Does the Sorbonne think itself despicable for having condemned Rousseau, Marmontel, myself, &c.? No; it is the stranger who thinks so, in its stead.

23. (p. 202.) Barillon was exiled to Amboise, and Richelieu, who sent him thither, was the first minister, says cardinal de Retz, who ventured to punish in the magistrates, *that noble firmness with which they represented to the king those truths, for the defence of which their oaths obliged them to expose their lives.*

24. (ibid.) If it be true, that virtue is useful to a state, it must be also useful to give clear ideas of it, and to engrave them, in the most tender infancy, on the memories of men. The definition I have given of virtue in the Treatise on the Mind, Disc. iii. chap. 13. appears to me to be the only one that is just. "Virtue, I have "there said, is nothing more than the desire of public happiness. "The

NOTES ON SECTION II.

"The general welfare is the object of virtue; and the actions it "enjoins, are the means which it employs to accomplish that ob- "ject. The idea of virtue, I have added, must therefore be "every where the same."

If in various ages and countries men appear to have formed different ideas of virtue, if philosophers have, in consequence, "treated the idea of virtue as arbitrary, it is because they have ta- "ken for virtue itself, the several means it makes use of to accom- "plish its object, that is to say, the several actions which it enjoins. "These actions have certainly been sometimes very different, "because the interests of nations change, according to the age and "their situation; and lastly, because the public good may, to a "certain degree, be promoted by different means."

The entrance of foreign merchandize permitted to-day in Germany, as advantageous to its commerce, and conformable to the good of the state, may be to-morrow forbidden. To-morrow the purchaser may be declared criminal, if by some circumstances that purchase become prejudicial to the national interest. "The same "actions may therefore become successively useful and prejudicial "to a nation, and merit by turns the name of virtuous and vicious, "without the idea of virtue's suffering any change, or ceasing to "be the same." Nothing is more agreeable to the natural law, than this idea. Could it be imagined that principles so sound, and so conformable to the public good, would have been condemned? Could it be imagined that a man would be prosecuted, who had defined, "true probity to be the habitude of actions useful to our "country, and regarded as vicious every action detrimental to "society?" Is it not evident that such a writer could not advance maxims contrary to the public good, without contradicting himself. Such, however, was the power of envy and hypocrisy, that I was persecuted by the same clergy, who, without opposition, had suffered the audacious Bellarmin to be elevated to the rank of a cardinal, for having maintained, *that if the pope forbids the exercise of virtue, and commands that of vices, the Romish church, under pain of a sin, was obliged to abandon virtue for vice, nisi*

*vellet*

*vellet contra conscientiam peccare.* The pope therefore, according to this Jesuit, had the right of destroying the natural law, and of stifling in man every idea of justice and injustice, and, in short, of replunging morality into that chaos, from which philosophy has drawn it with so much pains. Ought the church to have approved such principles? Why did the pope suffer their publication? Because they flattered his pride.

Papal ambition, always greedy of power, is never scrupulous in the choice of the means. In what country has not the maxim the most abominable, the most contrary to the public good, been tolerated by the power to whom it is favourable? In what country have they constantly punished the wretch who has incessantly repeated to the prince, "Thy power over thy subjects is without "bounds: thou mayest at thy will despoil them of their property, "load them with fetters, and deliver them to the most cruel tor-"tures." It is always with impunity, that the fox repeats to the lion, *You do them, Sire, a great deal of honour in making them beggars,*

*Vous leur faites, Seigneur,*
*En les croquant beaucoup d' honneur.*

The only expressions that cannot be repeated to princes without danger, are those that fix the bounds, which justice, the public good, and the law of nations, set to their authority.

25. (p. 204.) By metaphysics, I do not mean that jargon transmitted by the Egyptian priests to Pythagoras, by him to Plato, and by Plato to us, and which is still taught in some schools: but I mean, with Bacon, the knowledge of the first principles of any art or science whatever. Poetry, music, and painting, have their first principles, founded on a constant and general observation; they have, therefore, their metaphysics.

As to the scholastic metaphysics, is it a science? No: but I have just said a jargon; it is tolerable only to the false mind that can accommodate expressions void of sense: to the ignorant, who take words for things; and to knaves who want to make dupes. By a man of sense it is despised.

NOTES ON SECTION II.

All metaphysics, not founded on observation, consist solely in the art of abusing words. It is this metaphysics, that in the land of chimeras, is continually running after bladders of soap; from which t can never get any thing but air.

Now, banished to the schools of theology, it still divides them by its subtilities, and may one day again light up fanaticism, and again cause human blood to stream.

I compare these two sorts of metaphysics to the two different philosophies of Democritus and Plato. The first raises itself by degrees from earth to heaven, and the other descends by degrees from heaven to earth. The system of Plato was founded on the clouds, and the breath of reason has already dissipated the clouds and the system.

26. (p. 205.) Men have always been governed by words. If half of the weight of the silver in a crown be diminished, and its numeral value still preserved, the soldier thinks he has nearly the same pay. The magistrate authorised to judge definitively to a certain amount, that is, to such a weight of silver, must not judge to the amount of half that sum. In like manner are men duped by words, and by their uncertain significations. Writers are constantly talking about *good morals*, without attaching any clear ideas to those words. Can they be ignorant, that good morals is one of those vague expressions, of which every nation forms different ideas? If there be universal good morals, there are also those that are local, and consequently, I can, without offending good morals, have a seraglio at Constantinople, and not at Vienna.

27. (p. 206.) Theological disputes never are, and never can be, any thing more than disputes about words. If these disputes have frequently occasioned great commotions on the earth, it is because princes, said M. Chalotais, seduced by some theologians*, have

* Perhaps it has happened, at least as frequently, from the knavery of princes, who by encouraging one party against the other, have weakened them both, and consequently increased their own strength. T.

princes,

taken a part in these quarrels. Let governments despise their disputes; and the theologians, after railing, and reciprocally accusing each other of heresy, &c. will grow tried of talking, without understanding each other, and without being understood. The fear of ridicule will make them silent.

28. (p. 206.) It is to the disputes about words, that we are in like manner to refer almost all the accusations of atheism. There is no man of understanding who does not acknowledge an active power in nature. There is therefore, no atheist.

He is not an atheist who says, that motion is God; because, in fact, motion is incomprehensible, as we have no clear idea of it, as it does not manifest itself but by its effects: and lastly, because by it all things are performed in the universe.

He is not an atheist who says, on the contrary, that motion is not God: because, motion is not a Being, but a mode of Being.

They are not atheists, who maintain that motion is essential to matter, and regard it as the invisible and moving force that spreads itself through all its parts. Do we see the stars continually changing their places, and rolling perpetually round their center: do we see all bodies destroyed and reproduced incessantly, under different forms; in short, do we see nature in an eternal fermentation and dissolution? Who then can deny, that motion is, like extension, inherent in bodies, and that motion is not the cause of what is? In fact, says Mr. Hume, if we always give the names of cause and effect to the concomitance of two facts, and that wherever there are bodies, there is motion; we ought then to regard motion as the universal soul of matter, and the divinity that alone penetrates its substance. But are the philosophers of this last opinion atheists? No: they equally acknowledge an unknown force in the universe. Are even those who have no ideas of God, atheists? No; because then all men would be so: because no one has a clear idea of the Divinity: because in this case every obscure idea is equal to none, and lastly, to acknowledge the in-

comprehensibility of God, is, as M. Robinet proves, to say by a different turn of expression, that we have no idea of him.

29. (p. 209.) Man, to be happy, must have desires, such as employ him, and such whose objects his labour or his talents can procure him. Among the desires of this sort, the most proper to preserve him from disgust is that of glory. This springs up equally in all countries. It sometimes happens, that the search after glory exposes a man to too much danger: what rational motive can excite him to the pursuit of it in a kingdom where they persecute such men as Voltaire, Montesquieu, &c. If France, say the English, be reckoned a delicious country, it is for those that are rich, and do not think.

30. (211.) Far from condemning a systematic spirit, I admire it in great men. It is to the efforts made to destroy or defend those systems that we doubtless owe an infinity of discoveries.

Let men therefore continue to explain, by a single principle, if it be possible, all the physical phenomena in nature: but be continually on their guard against those principles: let them be considered merely as one of the different keys, which we may successively try, that we may at last find that which shall open the sanctuary of nature. But above all, let us not confound tales with systems; the latter must be supported by a great number of facts. It is these alone that should be taught in the public schools: provided however that we do not still maintain them to be true, a hundred years after experience has proved them to be false.

31. (p. 212.) Whence comes it, it was said to a certain cardinal, that there have been in all times priests, religions, and sorcerers? Because, he replied, there have always been bees and drones, labourers and idlers, knaves and dupes.

32. (p. 213.) Without examining if it be the interest of the public to admit the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, I shall observe that at least this dogma has not always been politically regarded as useful. It took its rise in the schools of Plato; but Ptolemy Philadelphus, king of Egypt, thought it so dangerous, that

that he forbade it to be taught in his dominions on the pain of death.

33. (p. 218.) It is known that the ancient Druids were animated with the same spirit as the Popish priests now are: that they had, before them, invented excommunication; that like them they would command people and kings; and that they pretended to have, like the inquisitors, the power of life and death, among all nations where they were established.

34. (p. 221.) I was one day present at a representation which the clergy of a German court made to their prince: I bore the marvellous ring, which makes men say and write, not what they would have others hear and read, but what they really think. Without the virtue of my ring, I should doubtless never have heard or read the following discourse.

When the clergy thought they had convinced the prince that religion was lost in his dominions; that debauchery and impiety boldly stalked abroad; that the holy days were profaned by labour; that the liberty of the press shook the foundations of his throne and of the altars, and that in consequence the bishops enjoined the sovereign to arm the laws against the liberty of thought, to protect the church and destroy its enemies: the following were the words I seemed to hear in that address.

"Prince, your clergy are rich and powerful, and would be still "more so. It is not the loss of morality and religion, but that of "their authority, they deplore. They desire to have the greatest "authority, and your people are without respect for the sacerdotal "power. We therefore declare them to be impious; we exhort "you to reanimate their piety, and for that purpose to give your "clergy more authority over them. The moment chosen to ac-"cuse the people, and irritate you against them, is not perhaps the "most favourable. Your soldiers have never been so brave, your "artisans more industrious, your citizens more zealous for the "public welfare, and consequently more virtuous. They will tell "you, without doubt, that the people most immediately subject

"to

" to the clergy, that the modern Romans have neither the same " valour, nor the same love for their country, nor consequently " the same virtue. They will add, perhaps, that Spain and Por- " tugal, where the clergy command so imperiously, are ruined " and laid waste by ignorance, sloth, and superstition; and, in " short, that among all nations, they who are generally honoured " and respected, are those same enlightened people to whom the " Catholic church will always give the name of impious.

" Let your ears, O prince, be for ever closed against such re- " presentations; that, in concert with your clergy, you may spread " darkness over your dominions, and know that a people skilful, " rich, and without superstition, are, in the eyes of the priest, a " people without morals. Is it, in fact, the rich and industrious " citizen, who has for example, all the respect for the virtue of " continence that it deserves?

" It is, they will say, in this respect with the present age, as " with those that are past. Charlemagne, created a saint for li- " berality toward the priesthood, loved women as well as Francis " I. and Henry VIII. Henry III. king of France, had a taste " less decent. Henry IV. Elizabeth, Louis XIV. and queen " Anne caressed their mistresses, or their lovers, with the same " hands with which they laid their enemies in the dust. They " will add, that the monks themselves have almost always in- " dulged in secret forbidden pleasures; and in short, that without " changing the natural constitutions of the inhabitants, it is very " difficult to keep them from that damnable disposition that car- " ries them toward women. There is, however, one method to " prevent it, and that is to make them poor. It is not from a " sound and well fed body that the demon of the flesh can be " driven: it is to be affected only by prayer and fasting.

" Let then your majesty after the example of some of your " neighbours, permit us to strip your subjects of all their super- " fluities, to tithe their lands, to pillage their property, and to " keep them in the strictest necessity. If, touched by these pious

"remonstrances, your majesty shall regard our prayers, may be-
"nedictions pour down upon you! No praise can equal so me-
"ritorious an action. But in an age when corruption infects all
"minds, when impiety hardens ever heart, may we hope that
"majesty and your ministers will adopt a counsel so salutary, a
"method so easy to secure the continence of your subjects?

"With regard to the profanation of holidays, our remonstran-
"ces may again appear absurd. The man who labours on Sun-
"days and holidays does not get drunk, or run after women; he
"injures no one, he serves his country and his family, and aug-
"ments the commerce of his nation.

"Of two states equally numerous and powerful, let one of
"them make, as in Spain, 130 holidays in the year, and some-
"times the day after; and the other on the contrary, keep no
"saints days, the latter of these people will have 80 or 90 days of
"labour more than the other, and can furnish the articles of its
"commerce at a lower price: its lands will be better cultivated,
"its harvests more abundant, and the balance of trade will be in its
"favour. The latter, therefore, being more rich and powerful
"than the former, may one day give it laws. There is nothing
"in common between the national interest and that of the clergy.
"The priest, being solely jealous of command, what would he
"do? Contract the mind of the prince, and extinguish in him
"even the lights of nature. A nation governed by such a prince,
"will sooner or later, become a prey to some neighbour more rich,
"more learned, and less superstitious; so that the grandeur of the
"Catholic clergy is always destructive of the grandeur of a state.
"Do the priests declaim against the profanation of holidays? Be
"not deceived, it is not the love of God, but that of their au-
"thority, by which they are influenced. We learn from expe-
"rience, that the less a man frequents the temples, the less re-
"spect he has for their ministers, and the less authority those
"ministers have over him. Now if power be the ruling passion
"of a priest, it is of little consequence to him whether a holiday

"be

" be to the labourer a day of debauch; whether, on going from " the temple, he run after wenches and frequent public houses, " and pass the remainder of the day in inebriety. The more sins, " the more expiations and offerings; the more riches and power is " acquired by the priest. What is the interest of the church? To " multiply vices. What does it ask of men? To be stupid and " wicked. Behold, Sire, with what we are reproached by the im- " pious. With regard to the liberty of the press, if your clergy " rise up ever so violently against it, if they tell you incessantly " that it saps the foundation of the law, and renders religion ridi- " culous, believe it not.

" It is not that your clergy do not perceive, with the solid and " ingenious author of the *English Investigator*, that truth is proof " against ridicule, and that ridicule is the touchstone of truth. A " ridicule cast on a demonstration is like mud thrown against mar- " ble: it soils it for a moment, it dries, the rain comes, and the " spot disappears. To agree that a religion cannot stand against " ridicule, is to allow it to be false. Does not the Catholic " church repeat incessantly that the gates of hell shall never pre- " vail against it? Yes; but priests are not religion. Ridicule " may weaken their authority, and fetter their ambition; they " therefore constantly cry out against the liberty of the press, " and entreat your majesty to forbid your subjects the practice of " writing and thinking, that you may deprive them in this respect " of the privileges of men, and consequently shut the mouth of " every one that can instruct mankind.

" If so many demands appear indiscreet, and jealous of the hap- " piness of your people, you would, Sire, rule over intelligent " inhabitants only, know, that the same conduct that will render " you dear to your subjects, and respectable to strangers, will be " imputed to you as a crime by your clergy. Dread the ven- " geance of a powerful body, and for the future resign to them " your sword; it is then that, assured of the piety of your peo- " ple, the sacerdotal power may again assume over them its an- " cient

" cient authority, see from day to day that authority increase, and " at last make use of it to bring you into subjection.

" We desire the more earnestly that your majesty would regard " our supplication, and authorize our demand, as it will deliver " us from a secret inquietude, that is not without foundation. " Quakers may establish themselves in your dominions; they may " propose to communicate, gratis, to the cities, towns, and vil- " lages, all instruction, moral and religious, that is necessary; " they might moreover form certain companies of finance, who " might undertake this enterprise of instruction at a discount, and " furnish it still cheaper and cheaper. Who can say whether the " magistrates might not then take it their heads to seize on our " revenues, and employ them to discharge a part of the national " debt, and by that means make your nation the most respectable " in Europe. Now it is of little consequence to us, Sire, whe- " ther your people be happy and respectable, but is of great con- " sequence that the sacerdotal body be rich and powerful."

This is what the representations of the clergy seemed to me to contain. I shall not weary myself with considering the address, the artifice with which the priests have in all countries continually asked in the name of heaven, the power and riches of the earth. I admire the confidence they have always had in the weakness of the people, and especially men in power. But what most of all surprises me, is, (when I reflect on the ages of ignorance,) to find that in this respect most sovereigns have always been out of the power of the clergy.

35. (p. 222.) There are some who say that at the moment of our birth God engraves on our hearts the precepts of the natural law. Experience proves the contrary. If God is to be regarded as the author of the laws of nature, it is as being the author of corporeal sensibility, which is the mother of human reason. This sort of sensibility, at the time of the union of men in society, obliged them, as I have already said, to make among themselves conventions and laws, the assemblage of which composes what is called the

laws of nature. But have those laws been the same among different nations? No: their greater or less perfection was always in proportion to the progress of the human mind; to the greater or less extent of knowledge that societies acquired, of what was useful or prejudicial; and this knowledge has been in all nations the produce of time, experience, and reflection.

To make us see in God the immediate author of the laws of nature, and consequently of all justice, ought the theologians to admit him to have passions, such as love, or vengeance? Ought they to represent him as a Being susceptible of predilection; in short, as an assemblage of incoherent qualities? Is it in such a God that we can discern the author of justice? Can we thus endeavour to reconcile what is irreconcileable, and confound truth with falsehood, without perceiving the impossibility of such a connection? It is time that men, deaf to theological contradictions, listen to nothing but the doctrins of wisdom: for, St. Paul says, "It is high time to awake out of sleep; the night *(of ignorance)* is far spent, the day *(of science)* is at hand; let us therefore put on the armour of light," to destroy the phantoms of darkness, and for that purpose let us restore to men their natural liberty, and the free exercise of reason.

36. (p. 223.) Can it be, that among almost all nations the idea of sanctity is annexed to the observance of a ritual ceremony, an ablution, &c. Can men be still ignorant that the only citizens constantly virtuous and humane, are those that are happy in their character. In fact, who among the devout are the most estimable? They that, full of confidence in God, forget there is a hell. Who, on the contrary, among the same devout are the most odious and inhuman? They that, timid, discontented, and unhappy, see hell continually open before them. Why are the devout in general the torment of their dwellings, railing incessantly at their servants, and making themselves hateful? Because, having the idea of the devil before them, and fearing perpetually to be carried away by him, their fear and their unhappiness render them malignant. If youth

youth be in general more virtuous and more humane than age, it is because, having more desires and more health, they are more happy. Nature did wisely, said an Englishman, to limit the life of man to 80 or 100 years. If heaven had prolonged his old age he would have become too wicked.

37. (p. 226.) If in Tartary, under the name of Dalai Lama, the grand pontiff be immortal; in Italy, under the name of Pope, their pontiff is infallible. If in the country of the Mongales the vicar of the grand Lama, receive the title of Kutuchta, that is vicar of the living God, in Europe the Pope bears the same title. At Bagdat, in Tartary, in Japan, if with a design to debase and subdue their kings, the pontiffs, under the name of caliph, lama, and dairo, have made emperors kiss their feet; and if these pontiffs, when mounted on a mule, have obliged the emperors to take the bridle and lead them through the streets: has not the pope exacted the same servility from the monarchs of the West? The pontiffs in every country have therefore made the same pretensions, and the princes the same submission.

If the deputies for the office of caliph have made human blood to stream in the East, the disputes for the papacy have in like manner made it stream in the West. Six popes have assasinated their predecessors, and set themselves in their places. The pope says, Baronius, were not then men but monsters.

Have we not every where seen the name of orthodox given to the strongest religion, and that of heresy to the weakest? Every where has the sacerdotal power been productive of fanaticism, and fanaticism of murder. Every where have men suffered themselves to be burnt for theological absurdities, and given in this manner equal proofs of obstinacy and courage.

But it is not in religious affairs only that men have every where shewn themselves to be the same: the same resemblance is to be found among them when some change in their habits and customs has been in agitation. The Mantchoux Tartars, who conquered the Chinese, would have cut off their hair; but the latter broke their

their fetters, routed the terrible Mantchoux, and triumphed over their conquerors. The czar would shave the Russians, and they revolted. The king of England would make the Highlanders wear breeches, and they rose in arms. In the East and West the people are therefore every where the same, and every where the same causes have raised up and pulled down empires.

At the time of the conquest of China, what was the prince that occupied the throne? A weak wretch, an idol whom they durst not inform of the bad state of his affairs, and to whom incense was continually offered by his favourites, while he was solely surrounded by intriguing courtiers, without judgment, without knowledge, and without courage. Who commanded the empires of the East and West, when Rome and Constantinople were taken and plundered by Alaric and Mahomet the second? Princes of the same sort. Such perhaps was the state of France in the old age of Lewis XIV. when it was beaten on every side.

It appears that men are every where the same from the degeneracy and ignorance into which every people successively fall, according to the interest which their government has to degrade them. If a minister be weak, and fear that the people will open their eyes, and discover his incapacity, he keeps them fast closed, and the stupidity of the people is then not the effect of a physical, but of a moral cause.

Does not a cause of the same kind animate with the same spirit those whom chance has brought up to the same employments? What is in Spain, Germany, and even in England the first care of the man in place? To enrich himself. The public welfare holds the second place only.

If in the inferior offices of government almost all men have the same supercilious behaviour, and the same incapacity for administration; to what is it to be attributed? To a defect in their organisation? No: but to that of their instruction. All men practised in the finesse of chicanery, and accustomed to judge only by precedent

cedent, ascend with difficulty to the first principles of laws; they extend the memory, and contract the judgment.

In the mind, as in the body, those parts only are strong that are exercised: the legs of chairmen and the arms of labourers make this evident. If the muscles of reason in the men of the law are commonly weak, it is because they have little exercise.

Facts without number prove that men are every where essentially the same; that the difference of climate has no sensible influence over their minds, and even very little over their tastes. The Illinois and the Icelander sits by his keg of brandy till he has drunk it out. In almost every country the women have the same desire to please as in France, the same taste for dress, the same care of their beauty, the same aversion to the country, and the same love for their capital, where, constantly surrounded by a number of admirers, they find themselves really of more importance.

When we cast our eyes over the universe, and perceive the same ambition in all hearts, the same credulity in all minds, the same duplicity in all priests, the same coquetry in all women, and the same love of riches in all ranks of people, how can we doubt but that men all resembling each other, differ only in the diversity of their instruction: that in every country their organs are nearly the same, and that they make nearly the same use of them; and that in short the hands of the Indians and Chinese are, for that reason, equally adroit in the manufacture of stuffs as those of the Europeans. Nothing proves therefore what is incessantly repeated, that it is to the difference of latitudes we ought to attribute the inequality of minds.

38. (p. 227.) The frauds of the priests are every where the same: they are every where anxious to appropriate the wealth of the laity. The Romish church for this sells a licence for relations to marry: it engages for so many masses, that is, for so many sixpenny pieces, to deliver every year so many souls out of purgatory, and consequently to remit them so many sins. At the Pagoda of

Tinagogo, as at Rome, the priests for the same sums sell nearly the same hopes.

"At Tinagogo, (says the author of *l'Histoire general des Voy-*
"*ages*, tom. ix. p. 402.) on the third day after a sacrifice that is
"made to the new moon in December, they place in six long
"and handsome streets an infinity of balances suspended by brass
"rods; there each devotee, to obtain the remission of his sins,
"gets into one of the scales of a balance, and, according to the
"different nature of his crimes, puts into the other scale different
"sorts of provisions or monies as a counterpoise. If his conscience
"reproach him with gluttony and violation of a fast, the counter-
"poise consists of honey, sugar, eggs, and butter. If he has been
"guilty of sensual pleasures, he weighs himself against cotton,
"feathers, cloth, perfumes, and wine. Has he been uncharitable?
"He weighs himself against pieces of money. Is he idle? The
"counterpoise is wood, rice, coal, cattle, and fruits. Is he, lastly,
"proud? He weighs himself against dry fish, brooms, cow-dung,
"&c. Now all that serves for counterpoise to the sinners belongs
"to the priests. All these sorts of donations form large piles.
"Even the poor, who have nothing to give, are not exempt from
"these alms. They offer their hair: more than a hundred priests
"sit with scissars in their hands to cut it off. The hair is also form-
"ed into great heaps: more than a thousand priests, ranged in
"order, form of it cords, braids, rings, bracelets, &c. which the
"devout souls purchase, and carry away as precious pledges of
"the favour of heaven. To form an idea of the sum to which the
"alms to the pagoda of Tinagogo alone may amount, it will suf-
"fice, says Pinto, the author of this relation, to mention that the
"ambassador having asked the priests at what sum they estimated
"those alms, they answered without hesitation, that only for the
"hair of the poor they got every year more than a hundred thou-
"sand pardins, that is, ninety thousand ducats of Portugal."

39. (p. 227.) Some philosophers have defined man to be *a monkey that laughs*; others, *a rational animal*; and others, *a credu-*

*lous animal.* This animal, they add, is mounted on two legs, has flexible fingers, and dexterous hands: he has many wants, and consequently great industry. He is moreover as vain and proud as credulous. He thinks that the whole system of nature was made for the earth, and the earth made for him. Is not this definition or description of man extremely just?

40. (p. 228.) Every one asks, what is truth or evidence? The root of the word indicates the idea we ought to annex to it. *Evidence* is deprived from *videre, video,* I see.

What is to me an evident proposition? It is a fact, of whose existence I can convince myself by the testimony of my senses, that never deceive me when I interrogate them with the necessary precaution and attention.

What is an evident proposition to the generality of mankind? It is, in like manner, a fact of which all may convince themselves by the testimony of their senses, and whose existence they may moreover verify every instant. Such are these two facts, *two and two make four; the whole is greater than a part.*

If I pretend, for example, that there is in the North Sea a polypus named kraken, and that this polypus is as large as a small island; this fact, though evident to me, if I have seen and examined it with all the attention necessary to convince me of its reality, is not even probable to him that has not seen it. It is more rational in him to doubt my veracity, than to believe the existence of so extraordinary an animal.

But if after travellers I describe the true form of the buildings in Pekin, this description, evident to those who inhabit them, is only more or less probable to others; so that the true is not always evident, and the probable is often true. But in what does evidence differ from probability? I have already said, "Evidence is a fact "that is subject to our senses, and whose existence all men may "verify every instant. As to probability it is founded on conjec- "tures, on the testimony of men, on a hundred proofs of the same "kind. Evidence is a single point: there are no degrees of evi- "dence.

" dence. On the contrary, there are various degrees of probability, " according to the difference, 1. of the people who assert; 2. of the " fact asserted." Five men tell me they have seen a bear in the forests of Poland: this fact not being contradicted by any thing, is to me very probable. But if not five only, but five hundred men should assure me they met in the same forests ghosts, fairies, demons, their united evidence would not be to me at all probable: for in cases of this nature, it is more common to meet with five hundred romancers, than to see such prodigies.

41. (p. 228.) Let us place before our eyes all the facts from the comparison of which a new truth is to result; and let us annex clear ideas to the words that are used in its demonstration. Nothing can conceal it from our perception; and this truth presently reduced to a simple fact, will be conceived by every attentive man almost as soon as proposed. To what then can we attribute the small progress made in the sciences by a young man? To two causes:

The one is, the want of method in the instructors;

The other, the want of ardour and attention in the pupil.

42. (p. 230.) The perpetual metamorphoses of genius into science has often made me suspect that all things in nature, of themselves, prepare and lead to it. Perhaps the perfection of arts and sciences is less the work of genius than of time and necessity. The uniform progress of the sciences in all countries confirms this opinion. In fact, if in all nations, as Mr. Hume observes, *it is not till after having wrote well in verse, that they come to write well in prose*, so constant a progress of human reason appears to me the effect of a general secret cause: it at least supposes an equal aptitude to understanding in all men of all ages and countries.

43. (p. 233.) Since men converse and dispute with each other, they must feel themselves endowed with the faculty of perceiving the same truths, and consequently an equal aptitude to understanding. Without this conviction, what could be more absurd than the disputes of politicians and philosophers? To what end should they talk

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talk when they cannot understand each other? But since they do, it is evident that the obscurity of a proposition never lies in the things, but in the words. So that on this subject one of the most illustrious English writers says, that if men were agreed about the signification of words, they would presently perceive the same truths, and all adopt the same opinions. See Hume on Liberty, and Necessity, Sect. 8.

This fact, proved by experience, gives the solution to a problem proposed five or six years since by the Academy of Berlin, which was: *Are the truths of metaphysics in general, and the first principles of natural theology and morality susceptible of the same evidence as the truths of geometry.* Annex a clear idea to the word *probity*, and regard it with me as *the practice of actions useful to our country.* What is then to be done to determine demonstratively what actions are virtuous, and what vicious? Name those that are useful or prejudicial to society. Now in general nothing is more easy. It is therefore certain, if the public good be the object of morality, that its precepts being founded on principles as certain as those of geometry, are like the propositions of that science, susceptible of the most rigorous demonstration. It is the same of metaphysics; which is a real science, when distinguished from that of the schools, it is kept within the bounds assigned it by the definition of the illustrious Bacon.

# SECTION III.

OF THE GENERAL CAUSES OF THE INEQUALITY OF UNDERSTANDINGS.

## CHAP. I.

### WHAT THESE CAUSES ARE?

THEY are reducible to two.

The one is the different series of events, circumstances, and situations that attend different men; (series to which I give the name of chance.)

The other is the desire more or less earnest that they have to instruct themselves.

Chance is not favourable to all, in precisely the same degree; and yet it has more share than is imagined in the discoveries with which we honour genius. To know all the influence of chance let us consult experience, which will teach us that in the arts it is to chance we owe almost all our discoveries.

In

All new ideas are the gift of chance.

In chemistry it is to the process in the grand work that the adepts* owe most of their secrets; these secrets were not the objects of their search; they ought not therefore to be regarded as the product of genius. If what I say of chemistry be applied to the different sorts of sciences, it will be found that in each of them chance has discovered all. Our memory is the chemist's crucible. From the mixture of certain matters thrown into a crucible, without design, sometimes result the most unexpected and astonishing effects; and in like manner from the mixture of certain facts, without design, in our memory, result ideas the most original and sublime. All the sciences are equally subject to the dominion of chance. Its influence is the same over all, but does not discover itself in a manner equally striking.

## CHAP. II.

### EVERY NEW IDEA IS THE GIFT OF CHANCE.

A TRUTH that is entirely unknown cannot be the object of my meditation; it may be considered as dis-

* Some adepts have searched for the philosopher's stone in Genesis; the ecclesiastics alone have founded it there.

All new ideas are the gift of chance.

covered when I get a glimpse of it. The first surmise is here the stroke of genius. But to what do I owe the first surmise? Is it to my understanding? No: it cannot employ itself in the search of a truth, of whose existence it has not even a conception. This surmise is, therefore, the effect of a word, of reading, of conversation*, of an ancident; in short, something to which I give the name of chance. Now if we are indebted to chance for our first surmises, and consequently for our discoveries, can we be assured that we do not also owe to it the means of extending and completing them?

The syren of Comus is the most proper subject to exemplify my ideas. If this syren was for a long time shewn at the fair†, without any one's guessing at its

* It is to the heat of conversation and dispute that we frequently owe the happiest ideas. If those ideas which have once escaped the memory, are no more presented, but lost without recovery; it is because we can scarcely find ourselves twice in precisely the same concurrence of circumstances that gave them birth. Such ideas therefore ought to be regarded as the gifts of chance.

† The fair of St. Germain at Paris: it was likewise exhibited by Comus in London. The construction of this machine may be be seen in the third volume of my Rational Recreations. Whatever utility might have attended this performance, it would certainly never have entitled Comus to the appellation of a man of genius, as it is evidently taken from the Onomatomantica Magnetica, described by Kircher in his second book De Art. Magnet. Printed at Cologn in 1643. T.

mechanism,

All new ideas are the gift of chance.

mechanism, it was because chance did not place before the eyes of any one, the objects of comparison from which the discovery must have proceeded. It was more favourable to Comus. But why is he not in France reckoned among men of great genius? Because his mechanism is more curious than useful. If it were attended with a very extensive advantage, no doubt but public gratitude would have placed Comus in the rank of the most illustrious men. He would have owed his discovery to chance, and the title of a man of genius to the importance of that discovery.

What follows from this instance?

1. That every new idea is a gift of chance.

2. If there be sure methods of forming men of learning and men of understanding, there are none for forming men of genius, and inventors. But whether we regard genius as a gift of nature or chance, is it not in either case the effect of a cause independent of ourselves? In this case, why regard as a matter of so much importance the greater or less perfection of education? The reason is plain. If genius depend on the greater or less perfection of the senses, as instruction cannot change the natural faculties of man, give hearing to the deaf, or speech to the dumb *, education is absolutely useless. On the the contrary, if genius be in part the gift of chance, men, after assuring themselves by repeated observa-

* This is not universally true; many dumb persons have been taught to speak very intelligibly. T.

tions

Genius is in a great measure the effect of chance.

tions of the means employed by chance in forming great talents, may, by making use of nearly the same means, produce nearly the same effects, and immensely increase those great talents.

Suppose, to produce a man of genius, chance should be combined in him with the love of glory: suppose again, that a man be born under a government that, far from honouring, degrades talents; in this case it is evident that a man of genius must be entirely the work of chance.

In fact this man must have either lived in the world, and owed his love of glory to the esteem paid to talents by the particular society with which he was connected*, or he must have lived in retirement, and owed the same love of glory to the study of history, and the remembrance of the honours anciently paid to virtue and talents; or lastly, to an ignorance of the contempt which his fellow-citizens have for each other.

Suppose, on the contrary, that this man be born in an age and under a form of government where merit is honoured: on this hypothesis it is evident that his love of glory, and his genius, will not be the work of chance, but of the very constitution of the state, and consequently of his education, on which the form of government has always the greatest influence.

If we consider understanding and genius as less the effects of organisation than chance (1), it is certain, as

* There are such societies among all nations, even the most stupid, if they be civilized.

I have

Of the limits to be set to the power of chance.

I have already said, that by observing the means made use of by chance in forming great men, we might, according to this observation, form a plan of education that would, by increasing their number in a nation, vastly retrench the power of this same chance, and diminish the immense share it now has in our instruction.

Yet if it be always to unforeseen causes or incidents that we owe the first surmise, and consequently the discovery of every other new idea, chance, I agree, will still constantly preserve a certain influence over our minds: but this influence has also its bounds.

## CHAP. III.

### OF THE LIMITS TO BE SET TO THE POWER OF CHANCE.

If almost all objects, considered with attention, did not contain the seed of some discovery: if chance did not distribute its gifts in a manner nearly equal, and did not offer to all, objects of comparison, whence new and great ideas may arise, the understanding would be almost entirely the gift of chance.

It would be to our education that we should owe our knowledge, and to chance that we should owe our understanding, and each individual would have more

or

or less, according as chance had been more or less favourable to him. Now what does experience teach us concerning this matter? That the inequality of understandings is less the effect of the unequal distribution of the gifts of chance, than the indifference with which we receive them.

The inequality of understandings ought therefore to be regarded principally as the effect of the different degree of attention, exerted in observing the resemblances and differences, the agreements and disagreements between different objects. Now this inequality of attention is the necessary consequence of the unequal force of our passions.

There is no man animated with an ardent desire of glory that does not always distinguish himself, more or less, in the art or science which he cultivates. It is true, that between two men equally desirous of becoming illustrious, it is chance that, by presenting to one of them objects of comparison from which result the most fruitful ideas and the most important discoveries, determines his superiority. Chance, by the influence which it always has over the choice of objects that offer themselves to us, will therefore always preserve some influence over our understandings. When we confine its power within those narrow limits, we do all that is possible. To whatever degree of perfection the science of education may be carried, we must never expect to make men of genius of all the individuals of a nation; all it can do is to increase them, and to make

Application necessary to the development of genius.

make the greatest part of them men of knowledge and discernment, and this is all that is within its power. It is sufficient to rouse the attention of the people, and encourage them to cultivate a science whose perfection will procure in general so much happiness to humanity, and in particular so many advantages to the nations by whom it is cultivated.

A people to whom public education should give genius to a certain number of citizens, and discernment to almost all, would be without doubt the first people in the universe. The only and sure method to produce this effect is early to habituate children to the fatigue of attention.

The seeds of discoveries presented to us by chance will remain barren, if attention do not render them fruitful. The scarcity of attention is the cause of that of genius. But what must be done to force men to application? Inspire them with the passions of emulation, glory, and the love of truth. It is the unequal force of those passions that we ought to regard as the cause of the great inequality in the understandings of men.

Indifference to glory stifles genius.

## CHAP. IV.

### OF THE SECOND CAUSE OF THE INEQUALITY OF UNDERSTANDINGS.

ALMOST all men are without passions, without love of glory (2): and so far from exciting in them this desire, most governments, by a mean and false policy (3) endeavour on the contrary to extinguish it; therefore, indifferent to glory, the people make little account of public esteem, and little efforts to deserve it.

I see among the greatest part of mankind none but greedy commercial men. If they fit out a ship, it is not with the hope to give their name to some new country. Solely sensible to the love of gain, all they fear is lest their vessel should depart from the frequented tracks; now those tracks lead not to discoveries. If the ship by chance, or tempest, be carried to an unknown land, the master compelled to stop there, makes no inquiry either concerning the country or the inhabitants; he takes in water, sets sail, and hurries to another coast, to exchange his merchandize. Returned at last to his own port, he unloads, fills the warehouses of his owners with commodities, but brings back no discoveries.

There

Science compared to a forest.

There are but few such men as Columbus*. They who now launch forth on the vast ocean are solely anxious for honours, employments, wealth, and power few embark to make new discoveries in science. How then can we wonder that such discoveries are rare?

Truths are sown by the hand of Heaven, here and there, in an obscure and pathless forest; a road bounds that forest; it is frequented by an infinite multitude of travellers, among whom are some curious men, whom even the thickness and obscurity of the wood inspires with a desire to penetrate it. They enter, but embarrassed by the trees, and torn by the briars, they are disgusted with the entrance, abandon the enterprise, and regain the beaten path. Others, but their number is small, animated, not by a vague curiosity, but an ardent and constant desire of glory, pierce into the thickest part of the forest, pass the dangerous bogs, nor cease their course till chance presents them with the discovery of some truth, more or less important. That discovery made, they turn their steps, and make a path from that truth to the high road, which every traveller then perceives as he passes by, because all

* It would have been much for the honour of Spain, and much for the interest of humanity, if such a man as Columbus had never existed. What did she gain by his discovery? Wealth: and what did she lose? Every title to justice and humanity; and entailed a horrid, detestable, indelible disgrace on the name of Spaniard and Christian. T.

that

The desire of glory synonimous with the desire of pleasure.

that have eyes may see it; and nothing is wanting to the discovery but an earnest desire to seek, and the patience necessary to find it.

Does a man, anxious for a great name, set himself in the pursuit of an important truth? He should arm himself with the patience of a hunter. It is the same with the philosopher as with the Indian: the least movement of the latter separates him from his game, and the least inattention of the former carries him away from the truth. Now nothing is more painful than to keep the body or the mind for a long time in the same immobility or attention: it is the consequence of a strong passion. In the Indian it is the necessity of eating, in the philosopher the desire of glory, that produces this effect.

But what is this desire of glory? Even the desire of pleasure. So that in every country where glory ceases to be the representative of pleasure, the citizen is indifferent to glory, and the country is sterile in men of genius and discoveries. There is no nation, however, that does not from time to time produce illustrious men; because there is none where some individual is not to be found, who, struck, as I have said, with the eulogies lavished in history on talents, does not desire to merit the same applause, and does not for that purpose go in quest of some new truth. If he obtain the object of his inquiry, and accomplish his discovery, he is elated with the acquisition, and carries it about his country in triumph. But what is his surprise, when, from the indifference

indifference with which mankind receive it, he finds at length the little consequence with which they regard it.

Then convinced, that in exchange for the labour and anxiety which the search of truth demands, he shall receive but little renown, and much persecution, his courage fails; he becomes disgusted, no longer pursues new discoveries, but delivers himself up to indolence, and stops short in the midst of his career.

Our attention is fugitive: strong passions are necessary to keep it fixed. A man for amusement will calculate a page of figures, but he will not calculate a volume, unless urged to it by the powerful incentive of glory or wealth. Those are the passions which set in action that equal aptitude which men have to understanding: without them that aptitude is no more than a lifeless power.

What, once more, is the understanding or judgment? The knowledge of the true relations that a certain number of objects have to each other, and to ourselves. To what do we owe this knowledge? To meditation and the comparison of objects. But what does this comparison suppose? An interest, more or less urgent, to compare them. The understanding is therefore the produce of that interest, and not of the greater or less perfection of the senses.

But, it will be said, if the strength of our constitution determines that of our desires; if man owes his genius to his passions, and his passions to his temperament,

New objection to be discussed.

ament, on this supposition, genius will still be the effect of organization, and consequently the gift of nature.

It is to the discussion of this point that this important question is now reduced : it is on the examination of this fact that its complete solution depends.

NOTES.

# NOTES.

1. (page 266.) I HAVE known the stupidity and wickedness of theologians: every thing is to be feared from them. I am therefore forced to renew, from time to time, the same profession of faith, and to repeat that I do not consider chance as a being; that I do not make a God of it; and that by this word I only mean, *a series of effects, of which we do not perceive the causes.* It is in this sense that they say of chance, *it determines the dice*; yet all the world knows, that the manner of shaking the box and throwing the dice is the cause that 3 turns up and not 6.

2. (p. 270.) Let thoughtless men declaim incessantly against the passions. We learn however from experience that there is no great artist, general, minister, poet or philosopher without them. Philosophy, as the etymology of the word proves, consists in the love and search after wisdom. Now all love is a passion: it is therefore the passions that supported in their labours, Newton, Locke, Bayle, &c. Their discoveries were the price of their meditations. These discoveries suppose a lively, constant, assiduous pursuit of the truth, and that pursuit a passion.

He is not a philosopher who, indifferent to truth or falsehood, delivers himself up to that apathy, to that pretended philosophical repose, which keeps the mind in a state of insensibility, and retards its progress toward the truth. That this state is easy, free from envy and the fury of bigots, and consequently that the slothful may call himself prudent, I allow, but not that he call himself a philosopher. What company is most dangerous to youth? That of those prudent and discreet men; and who are the more sure to stifle in youth every kind of emulation, as they point out to him in ignorance a security from persecution, and consequently the happiness of inaction.

NOTES ON SECTION III.

Among the apostles of idleness there are sometimes men of great understanding; but these are they who owe their indolence to the disgusts and chagrin met with in their search after truth. The majority of the remainder are men of mediocrity, who would have all men be the same. It is envy that makes them preach up idleness.

What is to be done to escape the seduction of their reasoning? Suspect its sincerity. Remember that an interest, either mean or noble, always makes men argue: that all superiority of understanding is disgusting to him who disdains glory, and wraps himself up in what is called a philosophical indolence; and that such a man has always an interest in stifling in the hearts of others an emulation that would give him too many superiors.

3. (p. 270.) The aim of the greatest part of despotic princes is to reign over slaves, and to change each man into an automaton. These despots, seduced by the interest of the present moment, forget that the imbecillity of the subjects announces the fall of monarchs; that it is destructive to their empire, and in short, that it is on the whole more easy to govern an enlightened people, than such as are stupid.

Man is born without passions.

# SECTION IV.

MEN COMMONLY WELL ORGANIZED ARE ALL SUSCEPTIBLE OF THE SAME DEGREE OF PASSION: THE INEQUALITY OF THEIR CAPACITIES IS ALWAYS THE EFFECT OF THE DIFFERENCE OF SITUATION IN WHICH CHANCE HAS PLACED THEM. THE ORIGINAL CHARACTER OF EACH MAN, (AS PASCAL HAS OBSERVED), IS NOTHING BUT THE PRODUCE OF HIS FIRST HABITS.

## CHAP. I.

OF THE LITTLE INFLUENCE WHICH ORGANISATION AND TEMPERAMENT HAVE ON THE PASSIONS AND CHARACTERS OF MEN.

AT the moment the child is delivered from the womb of his mother, and opens the gates of life, he enters it without ideas and without passions. The only want he feels is that of hunger. It is not therefore in the cradle that we receive the passions of pride, avarice, ambition, the desire of esteem and of glory. Those

factitious passions*, generated in the midst of towns and cities, suppose conventions and laws already established among men, and consequently their union in society. Such passions would be therefore unknown to him that was borne by a tempest at the moment of his birth to a desert coast, and like Romulus nourished by a wolf; and to him whom some fairy stole in the night from his cradle, and placed in one of those solitary enchanted castles where formerly dwelt so many knights and princesses. Now if we are born without passions, we are also born without character. The love of glory produced in us, is an acquisition, and consequently the effect of instruction. But does not nature endow us, in the earliest infancy, with the sort of organization proper to form in us such or such a character? On what is this conjecture founded? Has it been remarked that a certain disposition in the nerves, the fluids, or muscles, constantly produces the same manner of thinking; that nature retrenches certain fibres of the brain

* In Europe to the number of factitious passions we may add jealousy. Men are there jealous because they are vain. Vanity makes a part of almost all the principal European amours; it is not so in Asia; jealousy is there the mere effect of corporeal pleasures. It is known by experience, that the more the desires of the sultanas are restrained, the more ardent they become, and the more pleasure they give and receive. Jealousy, the offspring of the luxury of sultans and visirs, makes them build seraglios, and confine their women.

Self-love the only sentiment not acquired by education.

from one, to give them to another; and consequently always inspires the latter with a lively desire of glory? On the supposition that characters are the effect of organisation, what can education do? Can the moral change the corporeal disposition? Can the most just maxim give hearing to the dumb? Can the most sagacious lessons of a preceptor level the back of him that is crooked, or straighten the leg of the cripple, or encrease the stature of a pigmy? What nature has done, she alone can undo. The only sentiment that is engraved in our hearts in infancy is the love of ourselves: this love, founded on corporeal sensibility, is common to all men; therefore however different their education may be, this sentiment is always the same in them; so that in all countries, and at all times, men have loved, do love, and will love themselves in preference to all others. If a man be variable in all other sentiments, it is because all others are the effect of moral causes. Now if these causes be variable, their effects must be so likewise. To establish this truth by experience at large, I shall first consult the history of nations.

# CHAP. II.

## OF THE ALTERATIONS THAT HAVE HAPPENED IN THE CHARACTERS OF NATIONS AND OF THE CAUSES BY WHICH THEY WERE PRODUCED.

EACH nation has its particular manner of seeing and feeling, which forms its character: and in every nation its character either changes on a sudden, or alters by degrees, according to the sudden or insensible alterations in the form of its government, and consequently of its public education*.

That of the French, which has been for a long time regarded as gay, was not always so. The emperor Julian says of the Parisians, "I love them, because "their character, like mine, is austere and serious (1)."

The characters of nations therefore change: but at what period is the alteration most perceptible? At the moment of revolution, when a people pass on a sudden from liberty to slavery. Then from bold and haughty they become weak and pusillanimous: they dare not look at the man in office: they are inthralled, and it is of little consequence by whom they are inthralled. This dejected people say, like the ass in the fable,

* The form of government under which we live always makes a part of our education.

whoever

Pernicious effects of slavery on the mind.

*whoever be my master, I cannot carry a heavier load.* As zealous as a free citizen is for the glory of his nation, so indifferent is a slave to the public welfare. His heart, deprived of activity and energy, is without virtue, without spirit, and without talents; the faculties of his soul are stupified; he becomes indifferent to the arts, commerce, agriculture, &c. It is not for servile hands, say the English, to till and fertilise the land. Simonides entered the empire of a despotic sovereign, and found there no traces of men. A free people are courageous, open, humane, and loyal (2). A nation of slaves are base, perfidious, malicious, and barbarous: they push their credulity to the greatest excess. If the severe officer has all to fear from the resentment of the injured soldier on the day of battle, that of sedition is in like manner for the slave oppressed, the long expected day of vengeance; and he is the more enraged in proportion as fear has held his fury the longer restrained*.

What a striking picture of a sudden change in the character of a nation does the Roman history present us! What people, before the elevation of the Cæsars, displayed more force, more virtue, more love of liberty, and horror of slavery? And what people, when the throne of the Cæsars was established, shewed more

* The desposition of Nabob-Jaffier-Ali Kan, related in the Leyden Gazette of the 23d of June, 1761, is a proof of this.

weakness

weakness and depravity? (3). Their baseness disgusted Tiberius himself.

Indifferent to liberty, when Trajan offered they refused it: they disdained that liberty which their ancestors had purchased with so much blood. All things were then changed in Rome; and that determined and grave character which distinguished its first inhabitants, was succeeded by that light and frivolous disposition with which Juvenal reproaches them in his tenth satire.

Let us exemplify this matter by a more recent change. Compare the English of the present day with those under Henry VII. Edward VI. Mary and Elizabeth: this people now so humane, indulgent, learned, free, and industrious, such lovers of the arts and of philosophy, were then nothing more than a nation of slaves, inhuman and superstitious; without arts and without industry.

When a prince usurps over his people a boundless authority, he is sure to change their character, to enervate their souls; to render them timid and base (4). From that moment, indifferent to glory, his subjects lose that character of boldness and constancy proper to support all labours and brave all dangers: the weight of arbitrary power destroys the spring of their emulation.

Does a prince, impatient of contradiction (5), give the name of factious to the man of veracity? He substitutes in his nation the character of falsehood for that

of

of frankness. If in those critical moments the prince, giving himself up to flatterers, find that he is surrounded by men void of all merit, whom should he blame? Himself: for it is he that has made them such.

Who could believe, when he considers the evils of servitude, that there were still princes mean enough to wish to reign over slaves; and stupid enough to be ignorant of the fatal changes that despotism produces in the character of their subjects?

What is arbitrary power? The seed of calamities, which sown in the bosom of a state springs up to produce the fruit of misery and devastation. Let us hear the king of Prusia: *Nothing is better,* said he in a discourse address to the academy of Berlin, *than an arbitrary government, under princes just, humane, virtuous: nothing worse, under the common race of kings.* Now how many kings are there of the latter sort! and how many such as Titus, Trajan, and Antoninus? These are the thoughts of a great man. What elevation of mind, what knowledge does not such a declaration suppose in a monarch? What in fact does a despotic power announce? Often ruin to the despot, and always to his posterity (6). The founder of such a power, establishes his kingdom on a sandy foundation. It is only a transient, ill-judged notion of royalty, that is, of pride, idleness, or some similar passion, which prefers the exercise of an unjust and cruel despotism over wretched slaves, to that of a legitimate and friendly power (7), over a free and happy people. Arbitrary

The characters of nations change with their governments.

power is a thoughtless child, who continually sacrifices the future to the present.

The most formidable enemy of the public welfare, is not riot or sedition, but despotism (8): it changes the character of a nation, and always for the worse: it produces nothing but vices. Whatever might be the power of an Indian sultan, he could never form magnanimous subjects; he would never find among his slaves the virtues of free men. Chemistry can extract no more gold from a mixed body than it contains; and the most arbitrary power can draw nothing from a slave but his inherent baseness.

Experience then proves that the character and spirit of a people change with the form of government; and that a different government gives by turns, to the same nation, a character noble or base, firm or fickle, courageous or cowardly. Men therefore are endowed at their birth, either with no disposition, or with dispositions to all vices and all virtues; they are therefore nothing more than the produce of their education. If the Persian have no idea of liberty, and the savage no idea of servitude, it is the effect of their different instruction.

Why, say strangers, do we perceive at once, in all the French, the same spirit, and the same character, like the same physiognomy in all Negroes? Because the French do not judge or think for themselves (9), but after the people in power. Their manner of judging for this reason must be perfectly uniform. It is with

with Frenchmen as with their wives: when they paint themselves, and go to a public show, they all seem of the same complexion. I know that with attention we can always discover between the characters and understandings of individuals; but to do this requires time.

The ignorance of the French, the iniquity of their police, and the influence of their clergy, render them in general more like each other than men of other countries. Now if such be the influence of the form of government on the manners and character of a people, what alteration in the ideas and characters of individuals must not be produced by the alterations that happen in their fortune and situation!

## CHAP. III.

### OF THE ALTERATIONS THAT HAPPEN IN THE CHARACTERS OF INDIVIDUALS.

That which occurs in a great and striking manner in nations, occurs on a small scale, and in a manner less sensible, in individuals. Almost every change in their situation produces one in their

Change of character effected by despotism.

characters*. A man is severe, peevish, imperious; menaces and torments his slaves, his children and domestics. He loses himself by chance in a forest, and when night comes on, retires to a cavern, where he perceives a lion couching. Does this man preserve his morose and quarrelsome temper? No: he creeps with the utmost caution into a corner of the den, lest by the smallest noise he should rouse the fury of the beast.

From the den of the natural lion let us transport him to the cavern of a moral lion: let us place him in the service of a cruel and despotic tyrant: mild and moderate in the presence of his master, perhaps this man will become the most mean and cringing of all his slaves. But it will be said, his character is constrained, not altered: it is a tree that is bent by force, and whose natural elasticity will soon restore it to its former figure. But can it be imagined, that after a tree has been for some years bent into a particular figure, it will ever return to its original form? Whoever says that men do not easily change their characters by con-

* Manners with fortunes, humours turn with climes,
Tenets with books, and principles with times.
Ask men's opinions: Scoto now shall tell
How trade increases, and the world goes well;
Strike off his pension, by the setting sun,
And Britain, if not Europe, is undone.
POPE. T.

straint

The characters of individuals altert with their situation.

straint, only says that habits long established are not to be destroyed in an instant.

The man of ill humour preserves his character, because he has always some inferior on whom he can exercise his ill nature. But let him be kept a long time in the presence of a lion or a tyrant, and there is no doubt but a continued restraint, transformed into a habit, will soften his character. In general, as long as we are young enough to contract new habits, the only incurable faults, and vices, are those that we cannot correct without employing means of which morals, laws, or customs do not allow the practice. There is nothing impossible to education : it makes the bear dance.

If we reflect on this subject, we perceive that our first nature, as Pascal and experience prove, is nothing else than our first habit*.

Man is born without ideas and without passions, but he is born an imitator and docile to example ; consequently it is to instruction he owes his habits and his character. Now I ask, why habits contracted during a certain time, cannot at length be effaced by contrary habits. How many people do we see change their character with their rank, according to the different place they occupy at court, and in the ministry ; in short, according to the change that happens in their

* If the author of Emilius has denied this maxim, it is because he did not rightly comprehend the sense of Pascal.

situation

situation. Why does the robber, when transported from England to America, frequently become honest? Because he becomes a man of property, and has land to cultivate; in short, because his situation is changed.

The officer in the camp is void of compassion; accustomed to the sight of blood, he beholds it unmoved. But when he returns to London, Paris, or Berlin, he returns to the feelings of humanity. Why should we regard each character as the effect of a particular organization, when we cannot determine what that organization is? Why search in occult qualities for the cause of a moral phenomenon, which the developement of the passion of self-love so clearly and readily explains?

## CHAP. IV.

### OF SELF-LOVE.

MAN is sensible of bodily pleasure and pain, consequently he flies from the one, and pursues the other; and it is to this constant pursuit and flight that is given the name of self-love.

This sentiment, the immediate effect of corporeal sensibility, and consequently common to all, is inseparable from man. As a proof I offer its permanence, impossibility of destruction, or even a teration. Of

all

all our sentiments it is the only one that has these properties; it is to this we owe all our desires, and all our passions; which are nothing more in us than the application of self-love to particular objects*.

It is therefore to this sentiment, variously modified according to the education we receive, the government under which we live, and the different situations in which we are placed, that we are to attribute the amazing difference in the passions and characters of men.

Self love makes us totally what we are. Why are we so covetous of honours and dignities? Because we love ourselves, and desire our own happiness, and consequently the power of procuring it. The love of power, and the means of procuring it, are therefore necessarily connected in man with the love of himself (10). Every one would command, because every one would increase his felicity, and engage all his fellow-citizens to promote it. Now among all the methods to engage them, the most certain is power or force. The love of power, founded on that of happiness, is there-

* Modes of self-love the passions we may call;
'Tis real good, or seeming, moves them all;
But since not ev'ry good we can divide,
And reason bids us for our own provide;
Passions, tho' selfish, if their means be fair,
List under reason, and deserve her care.

POPE.

fore the common object of all our desires (11). Thus riches, honour, glory, envy, importance, justice, virtue, intolerance, in a word, all the factitious passions* are nothing but the love of power, disguised under those different names.—

Power is the only object of man's pursuit. To prove this, I shall shew that all the passions above recited are properly nothing more than the love of power; and I conclude from this love being common to all, that all are susceptible of the desire of esteem and glory, and consequently of the sort of passion proper to put in action the equal aptitude that men, organized in the common manner, have to understanding.

## CHAP. V.

### OF THE LOVE OF RICHES AND GLORY.

At the head of the cardinal virtues is placed force or power: it is the virtue most, and perhaps the only one really esteemed. The portion of weakness is contempt.

Whence arises our disdain of the Oriental nations,

* All our passions are factitious, except corporeal wants, pains, and pleasures.

some

The love of power common to all men.

some of whom are equal to us in industry, as is apparent from the fabric of their stuffs; and several of whom surpass us perhaps in the social virtues? Do we despise them merely for the meanness with which they bear the cruel and shameful yoke of tyrannical power? Such a contempt would be just: but no; we despise them as enervated and not practised in arms. It is then force that we respect (19), and weakness that we despise. The love of power however is common to all *; all desire it; but all do not, like Cæsar and Cromwell, aspire to supreme power: few men can conceive the design, and still fewer are able to execute it.

The sort of power generally desired is that easily attained. Every one may become rich, and every one desires wealth: for by this we can gratify all our appetites, succour the afflicted, and oblige, consequently command, a boundless number of individuals†.

Glory, like riches, procures power; and we in like

* The man without desire, who thinks himself perfectly happy, must, be, without doubt, insensible to the love of power. Are there men of this sort? Yes: but their number is too small to deserve regard.

† What nature wants, commodious gold bestows,
'Tis thus we eat the bread another sows.'
Useful, I grant, it serves what life requires,
But dreadful too, the dark assassin hires:
Trade it may help, society extend;
But lures the pirate, and corrupts the friend.

Of glory and the means of acquiring it.

manner pursue it. Glory is acquired either by arms or eloquence. We know in what esteem eloquence was held at Rome and in Greece; it there conducted men to grandeur and power. *Magna vis & magnum nomen*, says Cicero, *sunt unum et idem.* Among those people a great name gave great power. The renowned orator commanded a number of clients. Now in every republic, whoever is followed by a croud of clients is always a powerful citizen. The Hercules of the Gauls, from whose mouth issued an infinite quantity of gold threads, was the emblem of the moral force of eloquence. But why is that eloquence, formerly so respected, no longer honoured and cultivated, except in England? Because it is no where else the road to honours.

The love of glory, of esteem, and importance is therefore properly nothing more than a disguised love of power.

Glory is said to be the mistress of almost all great men: they pursue her through all dangers: to obtain her they brave the labours of war, the fatigue of study, and the resentment of a thousand rivals (13). That is, in countries where glory gives power; where it is nothing more than an empty title, where merit has no real importance, the citizen, indifferent about public fame, will make few efforts to obtain it. Why is glory

(13) It raises armies in a nation's aid;
But bribes a senate, and the land's betray'd.
POPE.

regarded

regarded as a plant of a republican soil, that degenerating in a despotic country, never thrives with remarkable vigour? Because in glory we in reality seek nothing but power, and under an arbitrary government all power vanishes before that of the despot. The man who there passes the night under arms, or in his study, thinks that he is animated by a desire of public esteem; but he deceives himself. Esteem is only the name he gives to the object of his pursuit: power is the thing itself.

Hence I observe, that the splendor and power with which glory is sometimes surrounded, and which render it so dear to us, must also frequently render us odious to our fellow-citizens, and hence proceeds envy.

## CHAP. VI.

### OF ENVY.

MERIT, says Pope, produces envy, as the body produces the shadow. Envy infers merit as smoke does fire. Envy, exasperated by merit, respects no place or dignity, not even the throne: it equally pursues a Voltaire, a Catinat, and a Frederic. If we were frequently to recollect how far its fury extends, perhaps, terrified by the persecutions that await a man of great

talents, we should not have courage to acquire them. The man of genius who says to himself, while seated by his lamp, this night my work will be finished: to-morrow will be the day of recompence: to-morrow the grateful public shall acknowledge the obligation it owes me: to-morrow I shall obtain the crown of immortality. This man forgets the power of envy. To-morrow arrives: the work is published: it is a finished work: the public however does not acknowledge its obligation. Envy drives far from the author the sweet perfume of eulogy *, and in its stead substitutes the stench of a malignant criticism and injurious calumny. The sun of glory scarcely ever shines but on the tomb of a great man. He that deserves esteem seldom enjoys it; and he that plants the laurel rarely reposes under its shadow †.

* Of all the passions envy is the most detestable; the portrait drawn of it, by I know not what poet, is horrible.

Compassion, says he, is softened by the misfortunes of men; envy rejoices in their tortures.

There is no passion that does not propose some pleasure for its object; the sole object of envy is the miseries of others.

Merit contemns the prosperity of the wicked and the stupid; envy, that of the good and learned.

Love and wrath, lighted in the heart, there burn for an hour, a day, a year; envy gnaws it to the last moment of existence.

Under the banner of envy march hatred, calumny, cabal, and treachery.

Envy is every where attended by meagre famine; the venom of pestilence, and the devastation of war.

† If great writers become the preceptors of mankind after their

Few minds are untained with envy.

But does envy dwell in every heart? There is none that is not at least penetrated by it. How many great men are there that cannot suffer competitors, that will not admit a partition of esteem with any of their brethren; and forget, that at the banquet of glory, every one should have, if I may so say, his portion!

Even the noblest souls sometimes lend an ear to envy; they resist its aspersions, but not without difficulty. Nature has made man envious: to desire an alteration in this respect, is to desire he would cease to love himself, that is, to desire an impossibility. Let not the legislature therefore attempt to silence jealousy, but to render its rage impotent, and establish, as in England, laws proper to protect merit against the resentment of a minister, and the fanaticism of a priest. This is all that sagacity can do in favour of talents. To pretend to more, and flatter ourselves with annihilating envy, is folly. All ages have declaimed against this vice: what have their declamations produced? Nothing. Envy still exists, and has lost nothing of its force, because nothing can change the nature of man.

There is a time however when envy is not felt; and that time is in early youth. Do we propose to surpass, or at least to equal the merit of men already honoured with public applause; do we aspire to a participation of the applause that is decreed them? Then, full of respect, their presence excites our emulation; we extol

death, it must be confessed, that while they live, the preceptors are sufficiently chastised by their pupils.

Excessive humility required of celebrated men.

them with transport; because we have an interest in praising them, in habituating the public to respect in them our future talents. Praise is therefore a tribute that youth freely pays to merit, and that is constantly refused it by maturer age.

At thirty years the emulation of twenty is changed into envy. When we lose the hope of equalling those we admire, admiration gives place to hatred. The resource of pride is the contempt of talents. The desire of the man of mediocrity is to have no superiors. How many envious men repeat softly after a comic writer,

> Je t'aime d'autant plus que je t'estime moins.
> The less I esteem thee the more I love thee.

If we cannot stifle the reputation of a celebrated man, we at last expect from him the most submissive modesty. The envious have reproached M. Diderot even with the first words of his Interpretation of Nature: *Young man, take this and read.* People were not formerly so difficult: the counsellor Dumoulin said of himself; *I that have no equal, and am superior to all the world.* The many humiliating circumstances now required of authors suppose a remarkable increase of pride in readers; such a pride declares a hatred of merit; and that hatred is natural. In fact, if anxious for happiness men court power, and consequently the glory and importance it procures, they must detest what in a man too illustrious deprives them of it. Why do they circulate so many bad reports of men of genius? Because

Universality of envy.

Because they find themselves inwardly constrained to think well of them. When they draw for a twelfth-cake, there is a part set aside for God; and when they examine the merit of a man of eminence, they always find some defect: that is the portion of envy.

When a man cannot raise himself above the rank of his fellow-citizens, he endeavours to bring them down to him. He who cannot be their superior, would at least be their equal* (14.) Such is man, and such he always will be.

Among virtuous characters, and the most above gross envy, perhaps there is no one not stained with a slight blemish of it. Who in fact can boast of having always heartily commended genius; of having never dissembled his esteem; of having never maintained a culpable silence, and of having never added to the praises given to talents, one of those perfidous *buts*, which jealousy so frequently extorts from us.†

* I have no title to aspire,
Yet when you sink I seem the higher:
In Pope I cannot read a line,
But with a sigh I wish it mine;
When he can in one couplet fix
More sense than I can do in six,
It gives me such a jealous fit,
I cry, pox take him and his wit! T.
SWIFT.

† How many men extol the ancients above the moderns, merely that they may not be forced to acknowledge they have among themselves such men as Locke, Seneca, Virgil, &c.

Every

Envy of literary characters.

Every great talent is in general an object of hatred, and hence that eagerness with which we purchase those pamphlets that lash them so furiously. Why else do we read them? It cannot be a desire to improve our taste (15); for those writers do not pretend to the abilities of a Longinus or Despreaux; not even to enlighten the public. Let him who cannot compose a good work never pretend to amuse himself with criticising those of others.

The impotency of producing any thing good makes a critic; his profession is humble. If such writers as Desfontaine please, it is as comforters of the stupid. The bitterness of satire is the proof of genius.

To blame with rancour is the praise of envy. It is the first eulogy an author receives, and the only one he can draw from his rivals. Men applaud with regret: it is themselves only they would find praiseworthy. There is scarcely any man who cannot persuade himself of his own merit; has he common sense? he prefers it to genius: has he some petty virtues? he gives them the preference to great talents. We despise all that is not self. There is but one man who can believe himself free from envy; and it is he that has never examined his own heart.

The protectors and panegyrists of genius are youth (16), and some few learned and virtuous men. But their impotent protection (17) can give a writer neither credit nor consideration. Yet, what is the common nourishment

Genius of merit stifled by envy.

nourishment of talents and virtue? Consideration and praise. Deprived of this subsistence, they both languish and die: the activity and energy of the soul is extinguished; as the flame expires that has nothing to nourish it.

In almost all governments, talents, like the prisoners of the Romans, condemned and given up to wild beasts, become their prey. Is genius despised at court? Envy does the rest (18) it destroys the very seed of genius. When merit is continually obliged to struggle with envy, it becomes fatigued, and quits the ground, if if there be no prize ordained for the conqueror. We love neither study nor glory for themselves; but for the pleasures, esteem, and power they procure. Why? Because in general, we are less desirous of being estimable than esteemed. Most writers, anxious only for the glory of the present moment (19), and to flatter the taste of their age and nation (20), present them with nothing but ideas adapted to the present day, and such as are agreeable to men in power, from whom they can expect money and consideration, together with an ephemeral success.

There are men, however, who disdain the glory of a moment; who, transporting their imaginations into futurity, and enjoying in advance the eulogies and respect of posterity, fear to survive their reputation (21). This motive alone makes them sacrifice the glory and consideration of the present moment, to the hope of,

sometimes

sometimes a distant, but greater glory and importance. These men are rare: they desire the applause of none but worthy citizens.

What were the censures of the Sorbonne to Marmontel (22)? He would have blushed at their applause. A garland woven by stupidity cannot sit easy on the head of genius. It is like the new ornament with which they have crowned the square house in Languedoc. The traveller, as he passes, says, "Behold the hat of "Harlequin on the head of Cæsar."

Let it not be imagined, however that the man most solicitous for a durable reputation, loves glory and truth for themselves. If such be the nature of each individual, that he is necessitated to love himself above all things, the love of truth must be in him always subordinate to the love of his happiness. He can only love in the truth the means of increasing his own felicity. Therefore he will pursue neither glory nor truth in a country and under a government where they are both despised.

The result of this and the preceding chapter, is, that the fury of envy, the desire of riches and talents, the love of importance, glory, and truth, are never in man any thing else than the love of power (23), disguised under those different denominations.

# CHAP. VII.

## OF JUSTICE.

JUSTICE is the preserver of the life and liberty of the citizens. Each one desires to enjoy his respective property; each one therefore loves justice in others, and would have them behave justly toward him. But who is solicitous to be just toward others? Do men love justice for the sake of justice, or for the consideration it procures? That is the object of my inquiry.

Man is so often ignorant of himself: we perceive so much contradiction between his conduct and his discourse*, that to know him we must study his actions and his nature.

* In morality, as in religion, there are a few sincere persons, and a great many hypocrites. A thousand men adorn themselves with sentiments not their own, and which they cannot have. When we compare their conduct with their discourse, we find none but knaves that would make dupes. We ought in general to mistrust the probity of those who pretend to extraordinary probity, and set themselves up for ancient Romans. There are who appear really virtuous at the moment the curtain is drawn up, and they are going to perform a great part on the theatre of the world. But behind the scenes how many are there who preserve the same character of equity, and are always just?

The savage has no idea of justice.

# CHAP. VIII.

## OF JUSTICE CONSIDERED IN THE MAN OF NATURE.

To judge of man, let us consider him in his primitive state, in that of a ferocious savage. Does the savage love and respect equity? No: it is force he regards. He has no idea of equity in his heart, nor any word to express it in his language. What idea can he form of it, and what in fact is injustice? The violation of a convention or law made for the advantage of the majority. Injustice, therefore, cannot precede the establishment of a convention, a law, and a common inte-

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What convinces me of the love which the ancient Romans had for virtue, is the knowledge of their laws, and their manners; without this knowledge, the virtue of the modern Romans would make me suspect that of the ancient, and I should say with Cardinal Bessarion, on the subject of miracles, *that the new make the old doubtful.*

The man just, but intelligent, will not pretend to love justice for itself. Is he without fault? We allow without blushing, that in all our actions we never have any thing but our happiness in view; but we always confound it with that of our fellow-citizens. Few place it so happily.

rest

The formation of society and languages must precede that of laws.

rest. Before law, there is no injustice. *Si non esset lex, non esset peccatum.* Now what does the establishment of laws suppose?

1st. The union of men in a society, greater or less.

2d. The formation of a language proper to communicate a certain number of ideas*.

Now if there be savages whose language does not contain above five or six sounds or cries, the formation of a language must be the work of several centuries. Until that work be completed, men without convention and laws, must live in a state of war.

This state, they will say, is a state of misery; and

* According to Mr. Locke, "A law is a rule prescribed to the "people, with the sanction of some punishment or reward, proper "to determine their wills." All law, according to him, supposes reward or punishment attached to its observation or infraction.

This definition laid down, the man who violates, among a polished people, a convention not attended with this sanction, is not punishable: he is however unjust. But could he be unjust before the establishment of all convention, and the formation of a language proper to express injustice? No: for in that state, man can have no idea of property, nor consequently of justice.

What does experience teach us about this matter? Experience, to which, in morality as well as in physics, we must submit the most plausible theories, and which alone can establish their truth or falsehood; experience tells us, that man has ideas of force before those of justice; that, in general, he has no love of justice; that even in polished nations, where people are continually talking of equity, no one regards it, unless he be forced by the fear of a power equal or superior to his own.

misery

Illustration of the rights of the stronger.

misery being the creator of laws, must force men to accept them. Yes; but till they are accepted, men are not the less unjust for being miserable. How can they be said to usurp the field or orchard of the present possessor, and commit a robbery, when there is no property or partition of fields or orchards? Before the public interest has declared the law of first possession to be held sacred, what can be the plan of a savage inhabitant of a woody district, from which a stronger savage had driven him?

What right have you, he would say, to drive me from my possession?

What right have you, says the other, to that possession?

Chance, replies the first, led my steps thither: it belongs to me because I inhabit it, and land belongs to the first occupier.

What is that right of the first occupier (24)? replies the other; if chance first led you to this spot, the same chance has given me the force necessary to drive you from it. Which of these two rights deserves the preference? Would you know all the superiority of mine? Look up to heaven and see the eagle that darts upon the dove: turn thine eyes to the earth, and see the lion that preys upon the stag: look toward the sea, and behold the gold-fish devoured by the shark. All things in nature show that the weak is a prey to the powerful. Force is the gift of the gods; so that I have a right to possess all that I can seize. Heaven,

by

Justice pre-supposes a state of civilization.

by giving me these nervous arms, has declared its will. Be gone from hence, yield to superior force, or dare the combat (25).

What answer can be given to the discourse of this savage, or with what injustice can he be accused, if the law of first occupation be not yet established?

Justice then supposes the establishment of laws. The observance of justice supposes an equilibrium in the power of the inhabitants. The maintainance of that equilibrium is the masterpiece of the science of legislation. It is by a mutual and salutary fear that men are made to be just to each other. When this fear is no longer reciprocal, then justice becomes a meritorious virtue, and then the legislation of a people is vicious. Its perfection supposes that man is compelled to justice.

Justice is unknown to the solitary savage. If the polished man have some idea of it, it is because he knows the laws. But does he love justice for itself? It is experience that must instruct us in this matter.

The love of justice is founded either on fear or hope.

## CHAP. IX.

### OF JUSTICE CONSIDERED IN POLISHED MAN AND NATIONS.

WHAT is the love which man has for justice? To determine this question, we must place him above all hope and fear: make him an oriental monarch.

When seated on his throne, he can levy on his people taxes without limits. Ought he to do it? No. The measure of all taxes is the wants of the state. Every tax, when pushed beyond those wants, is a robbery, an injustice. No truth is more evident than this. Yet, notwithstanding man's pretended love of equity, there is no Asiatic monarch who dons not commit this injustice, and commit it without remorse. What can we infer from this fact? That man's love of justice is founded either on a fear of the evils attendant on iniquity, or from the hope of the good consequences of esteem, consideration, and, in short, from the power attached to the practice of justice.

The necessity which we are under to form virtuous men, to reward and punish, to institute wise laws, and to establish a regular form of government, is an evident proof of this truth.

Let

Of the love of justice in nations.

Let what I have said of man be applied to nations. Two nations are neighbours; they are in certain respects in a reciprocal dependance: they are consequently forced to make conventions between them, and to form the law of nations. Do they regard it? Yes, so long as they reciprocally fear each other, so long as a certain balance of power subsists between them. When this balance is destroyed, the strongest nation violates their conventions without concern (26). It becomes unjust, because it can be so with impunity.

The so much boasted respect of man for justice is never* any thing more than a respect for power.

Yet there are no people who do not in war say justice is on our side. But when, and in what situation? When surrounded by powerful nations, who may take part in their quarrels. What is then the object of their pretence? To shew their enemy to be unjust, ambitious, and dreadful: to excite the jealousy of other nations against them, and by making allies to become strong by the force of others. The object of a nation in such appeals to justice, is to encrease its power, and to secure a superiority over a rival nation.

* Perhaps there are many men, there are certainly some, who on a close examination of their own hearts, cannot assent to this strong assertion of our author. Whether the real love of justice in these men proceeds from principles strongly inculcated and long practised, that is from education; or from an innate principle, is here immaterial. T.

Reply of Brennus to the Roman ambassadors.

The pretended love of justice of nations, is therefore nothing but a real love of power.

To confirm this truth, suppose the neighbours of two rival nations to be fully employed with their own affairs, and not able to take any part in the quarrel, what then happens? The most powerful of the two nations, without any appeal to justice, or regard to equity, carries fire and sword into the country of its enemy. Force then becomes right: and miserable is the condition of the weak and conquered.

When Brennus at the head of the Gauls attacked the Clusians, "What offence, said the Roman ambassadors, have the Clusians given you?" Brennus laughed at the question. "Their offence, he replied, "is the refusal they make to divide their country with "me. It is the same offence that the people of Alba, "the Fidenians and Ardeans formerly gave you, and "lately the Vienians, the Falisci, and the Volsci. To "avenge yourselves, you took up arms, and washed "away the injury with their blood: you subdued the "people, pillaged their houses, and laid waste their ci-"ties and their countries: and in this you did no wrong "or injustice: you obeyed the most ancient laws, which "give to the strong the possessions of the weak; the "sovereign law of nature, that begins with God, "and ends with animals. Suppress, therefore, O Ro-"mans, your pity for the Clusians. Compassion is "yet unknown to the Gauls: do not inspire them with "that

Conquerors despise justice.

" that sentiment, lest they should have compassion on " those whom you oppress."

Few chiefs have the boldness and candour of Brennus. Their language is different, but their actions are the same; and, in fact, they have all the same contempt of justice (27).

The history of the world is a vast collection of reiterated proofs of this truth (28). The invasions of the Huns, the Goths, the Vandals, the Suevi, and the Romans; the conquests of the Spaniards and Portuguese in both Indies, and lastly our croisades; all prove that nations in their enterprizes consult force, not justice. Such is the picture which history presents us. Now the same principle that actuates nations, must necessarily, and in like manner actuate the individuals who compose them. Let the conduct of nations, therefore, elucidate that of individuals.

## CHAP. X.

INDIVIDUALS, LIKE NATIONS, ESTEEM JUSTICE SOLELY FOR THE CONSIDERATION AND POWER IT PROCURES THEM.

Is not a man, with regard to his fellow-citizens, nearly in the same state of independence, that one

people are to another? Man then loves justice (29) merely for the power and happiness it procures him. To what other cause, in fact, except to the extreme love of power, can we attribute our admiration of conquerors (30)? "The conqueror, said the pirate Demetrius to Alexander, is a man, who at the head of "a hundred thousand soldiers, takes at once a hundred thousand purses, and cuts the throats of a hundred thousand citizens; who does on a large scale, what "the robber does on a small one; and who, by being "more unjust than the latter, is more destructive to "society." The robber is a terror to an individual. The conqueror, like the tyrant, is the scourge of a nation. What makes us respect Alexander and Cortez, and despise Cartouch and Rassiat. The power of the one, and the impotence of the other. In the robber it is not properly the crime, but the weakness which we despise (31). The conqueror appears as invested with great power; we would be invested with the same power, and we cannot despise what we wish to attain.

The love which man has for power is such, that in all cases the exercise of it is agreeable to him because it makes him recollect his possesssion of it. Every man would have great power, and every man knows that it is almost impossible to be at once constantly just and powerful. Man makes, without doubt, a better or worse use of his power, according to the education he has received. But be it as good as it may, there is no great man who does not commit some acts

of

The love of equity is subordinate to the love of power.

of injustice. The abuse of power is connected with its existence, as the effect with the cause. Corneille says,

Qui peut tout ce qu'il veut, veut plus que ce qu'il doit (32).

He who can do whatever he will, wills more than he ought.

This verse is a moral axiom confirmed by experience; and yet no one refuses a great place for fear of exposing himself to the temptation of injustice*.

Our love of equity, therefore, is always subordinate to our love of power. Man, solely anxious for himself, seeks nothing but his own happiness. If he respects equity, it is want that compels him to it (33).

If a difference arise between two men nearly equal in power, each of them, restrained by a reciprocal fear, has recourse to justice; each of them submits to its decision; that he may interest the public in his favour, and thus acquire a certain superiority over his adversary.

But let one of these two men be greatly superior in power to the other, so that he can rob him with impunity; and then deaf to the voice of justice, he does not litigate, but command. It is not equity, nor even the

* This must be understood with limitation: many men have refused power, from a fear of temptation, and a consciousness of their own weakness.

The love of power the sole motive of action in all governments.

appearance of equity, that determines between the weak and powerful; but force, crime, and tyranny. It is thus that the divan gives the name of seditious to the remonstrances of the impotent, whom it oppresses.

To show still more clearly the great love that men have for power, I shall add but one proof to the foregoing, which is the strongest.

## CHAP. XI.

THE LOVE OF POWER, UNDER EVERY FORM OF GOVERNMENT, IS THE SOLE MOTIVE OF MAN'S ACTIONS.

"UNDER every form of government, says M. Mon-
"tesquieu, there is a different principle of action.
"Fear in despotic states, honour under monarchies,
"and virtue in republics, are the several moving prin-
"ciples."

But on what proof does M. Montesquieu found this assertion*. Is it quite evident that fear, honour,

* Fear, says M. Montesquieu, is the moving principle in despotic empires. He is mistaken. Fear does not increase, but weakens the spring of the mind. I can admit nothing for the active principle of a nation, but the constant objects of the desire of almost

and

The love of power the sole motive of action in all governments.

and the love of virtue, are the different motives in different governments? May we not assert on the contrary, that one cause alone, but varied in its applications, is equally the principle of activity in all empires; and that if M. Montesquieu, less affected by the show of his division, had more scrupulously discussed

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all the inhabitants. Now, in despotic states there are but two; one is the desire of money, and the other the favour of the monarch.

In the two other forms of government there are, according to the same writer, two other moving principles, of a nature, says he, very different: the one is honour, under monarchical states; the other virtue, which is applicable to republics only.

The words Honour and Virtue are not indeed perfectly synonimous. Yet if the word Honour constantly brings to the mind the idea of some virtue, these terms differ only in the extent of their signification. Honour and virtue are therefore principles of the same nature.

If M. Montesquieu had not proposed to give each form of government a different principle of action, he would have perceived the same principle in all. This principle is the love of power, and consequently personal interest modified according to the different constitutions of the states, and their several legislations. If virtue be, as he says, the active principle in republics, it is at most only in poor and warlike republics. The love of gold is that of commercial republics.

It appears, therefore, that in all governments man obeys his own interest; but that his interest is not the same in all. The more we examine in this respect the manners of a people, the more convinced we are, that it is to their legislation they owe their vices and their virtues. The principles of M. Montesquieu on this matter appear to me to be more showy than solid.

this

this question, he would have attained more profound, clear, and general ideas: he would have perceived in the love of power, the moving principle of every individual: he would have found in the various means of acquiring power, the principle to which we ought, in all ages and all countries, to refer the different conduct of men. In fact, power is in every nation either concentered in one man, as in Morocco and Turkey; or, as in Venice and Poland, distributed among several; or, as in Sparta, Rome, and England, divided among the whole body of the nation. According to these several partitions of authority, we are sensible that the inhabitants will contract different habits and manners, and yet all propose the same object, which is that of pleasing the supreme power, of rendering it propitious to them, and thus obtaining some portion or emanation of its authority.

## OF THE GOVERNMENT OF A SINGLE PERSON.

If this government be strictly arbitrary, the supreme power resides in the hands of a sultan: who is in general badly educated. Does he grant his protection to certain vices; is he without humanity, without love of glory; and does he sacrifice to his humour the happiness of his subjects? The courtiers, jealous of his favour only, model their conduct by his, and in proportion as the despot shews more indifference for the patriotic virtues, they affect to hold them in the greater contempt.

In

In this country we find no such men as Timoleon, Leonidas, Regulus, &c. Such citizens cannot flourish without that degree of consideration and respect which was shown to the virtuous man; who in Rome and Greece, being secure of the national esteem, saw nothing above him.

In a despotic state, what respect will be paid to the honest man? The sultan, sole disposer of rewards and punishments, centers all consideration within himself. No one can there shine but by his reflected light, and the vilest favourite holds an equal rank with the greatest hero. In every government of this sort, emulation must be extinguished. The interest of the despot being frequently opposite to the interest of the public, must obscure every idea of virtue; and the love of power, the moving principle of each individual, cannot there form just and virtuous men.

### OF THE GOVERNMENT OF SEVERAL.

In governments of this sort the supreme power is in the hands of a certain number of great men. The body of the nobles is the despot (34). Their object is to keep the people in shameful and inhuman poverty and slavery. Now what is to be done to gain their protection and favour? Enter into their views; favour their tyranny, and perpetually sacrifice the happiness of a great number, to the pride of a few. In such a nation, it is also impossible that the love of power should produce good citizens.

## OF THE GOVERNMENT OF ALL.

In this state, the supreme power is equally divided among all the orders of the inhabitants. The nation is then the despot. What does it require? The happiness of the greatest number. By what means is its favour to be attained? By services rendered it. Therefore, every action conformable to the interest of the greatest number is just and virtuous: consequently, the love of power, the moving principle of the inhabitants, must compel them to the love of justice and of talents.

What does this love produce? The public happiness. The supreme power divided among all the orders of inhabitants, is the soul that is equally diffused through all the members of the state; animates it, and renders it healthful and vigorous.

It cannot therefore be wonderful, that this form of government is always cited as the best. Free and happy citizens will obey no legislation but what themselves have formed: they own nothing above them but equity and the laws. They live in peace; for in morality, as in physics, it is the equilibrium of force that produces tranquillity. If an ambitious man destroy this equilibrium, and there no longer exists a mutual dependence among the several orders of citizens; or if there be, as in Persia, one man, or, as in Poland, a body of men, who have an interest separate from that of their nation: nothing is then to be seen but oppressors and oppressed; the inhabitants are divided into two classes only, tyrants and slaves.

If

The history of Cromwell proves that justice is not loved for its own sake.

If M. Montesquieu had thought deeply on these matters, he would have perceived, that in every country men are united by the love of power, but that power is obtained by different means, according as the supreme authority is centered, as in the East, in the hands of a single person; or divided, as in Poland, among the body of the nobles; or as in Rome and Sparta, among the several orders of the state: and that it is to the different manners by which power is acquired, that men owe their vices and their virtues: and that they do not love justice merely for itself.

One of the strongest proofs of this truth, is the baseness with which kings themselves honoured injustice in the person of Cromwell. This Cromwell, the blind and criminal instrument of the future liberty of his country, was nothing more than a lawless and formidable robber. Yet scarcely was he styled Protector, when all the Christian princes courted his friendship, and all of them offered, by their deputations and their embassies, to legitimate, as far as was in their power, the usurper's crimes. No one then was offended at the baseness with which his alliance was courted. Injustice, therefore, is never despised but in the weak. Now if the moving principle of monarchs and whole nations be that of the individuals who compose them, we may rest assured that man, solely solicitous to increase his importance, loves not in justice any thing but the power and happiness it procures him.

It is to the same motive he owes his love of virtue.

CHAP.

# CHAP. XII.

## OF VIRTUE.

THE word Virtue, equally applicable to prudence, courage, and charity*, has, therefore only a vague signification. However it constantly recals to the mind the confused idea of some quality useful to society.

When qualities of this sort are common to the greatest part of the citizens a nation is happy within itself, formidable without, and worthy of imitation by posterity†. Virtue, always useful to man and consequently always respectable, ought, at least in certain countries, to reflect power and consideration on its possessors. Now it is the love of consideration that

* *Virtue*, says Cicero, is derived from the word *vis*: its natural signification is *fortitude*. It has the same root in Greek. Force and courage are the first ideas that men could form of virtue.

† Virtuous and vicious ev'ry man must be.
Few in th' extreme, but all in the degree,
The rogue and fool by fits is fair and wise;
And e'en the best, by fits what they despise.
'Tis but by parts we follow good or ill;
For, vice or virtue, self directs it still. T.

POPE.

man

Virtue is not loved merely for its own sake.

man takes to be in him the love of virtue. Each one pretends to love it for itself. This phrase is in every one's mouth, but in no one's heart. What motive makes the monk fast, wear a hair cloth, and flog himself? The hope of eternal happiness: the fear of hell, and the desire of heaven.

Pleasure and pain, those productive principles of monastic virtue, are the principles of the patriotic virtues also. The hope of rewards makes them flourish. Whatever disinterested love we may affect to have, *without interest to love virtue there is no virtue.* To know man, in this respect, we must study him; not by his conversation, but his actions. When I speak I put on a mask: when I act I am forced to take it off. It is not, therefore, by what I say, but what I do, that men are to judge me; and they will judge me rightly.

Who preaches up the love of humility and poverty more than the clergy? And what proves the falsity of that love more strongly than the history of the clergy itself?

The elector of Bavaria, it is said, has not, for maintaining his troops, his police, and his court, so large a revenue as the church has for maintaining its priests. Yet in Bavaria, as every where else, the clergy preach up the virtue of poverty. It is therefore the poverty of others they extol.

To know the real esteem in which virtue is held, let us suppose it banished to the dominions of a monarch where it can expect no grace or favour. What re-

Power is always honoured, never despised.

spect will be paid at his court to virtue? None. Nothing can be there respected but baseness, intrigue, and cruelty, disguised under the names of decency, wisdom, and firmness. Does the vizir there give audience. The nobles, prostrate at his feet, can scarcely vouchsafe to cast a look upon merit. But it will be said, the homage of these courtiers is forced; it is the effect of their fear. Be it so. More respect then is paid to fear, than to virtue. These courtiers, it will be added, despise the idol they worship. No such thing. Men hate the powerful; they do not despise them. It is not the wrath of the giant, but of the pigmy, we despise. His impotence renders him ridiculous. Whatever may be said, we do not really despise him, whom we dare not despise to his face. Secret contempt proves weakness and what men pretend to in this case, is nothing more than the boastings of an impotent hatred (35). The man in power is the moral giant; he is always honoured. The homage rendered to virtue is transient, that to force eternal. In the forest, it is the lion, and not the stag, that is respected. Force is every thing upon earth. Virtue without importance becomes insignificant. If in the ages of oppression it has sometimes shone with the greatest lustre, if when Thebes and Rome groaned under tyranny, the intrepid Pelopidas, and the virtuous Brutus, arose and armed, it was because the sceptre then shook in the hands of tyranny: because virtue could still open a passage to grandeur and power.

When

Virtue despised in the East.

When it can no longer make its way, when tyranny, by the aid of luxury and baseness, is seated firmly on its throne, and has bowed down the people to slavery, then no longer are seen those sublime virtues, that, by the influence of example, might still be so useful to mankind. The seeds of heroism are suffocated.

In the East, a masculine virtue would be a folly, even in the sight of those who still pique themselves on honesty. Whoever should there plead the cause of the people, would pass for seditious.

Thamas Kouli-Khan entered India with his army; rapine and desolation followed him. A bold Indian stopped him: "O Thamas, said he, if thou art a god, "act like a god. If thou art a prophet, conduct us "into the way of salvation. If thou art a king, cease "to be a barbarian; protect the people, and do not "destroy them." "I am not, replied Thamas, a god, "to act like a god; nor a prophet, to lead you to sal- "vation; nor a king, to make you happy: but I am a "man, sent by the wrath of heaven to chastise these "nations (36)." The discourse of the Indian was regarded as seditious (37), and the answer of Thamas applauded by the army.

If there be on the theatre a character universally admired, it is that of Leontine. Yet in what esteem would such a character have been in the court of a Phocas? His magnanimity would have alarmed the favourites, and the people, ever at length the echo of the great, would have condemned his noble boldness.

Manner in which most Europeans consider virtue.

Four and twenty hours residence in an Oriental court would prove what I here advance. Fortune and authority are there alone respected. How should virtue be there esteemed, or even known? To form clear ideas of it, we must live in a country where (38) public utility is the only measure of human actions. That country is yet unknown to geographers. But the Europeans, it will be said, are at least in this respect very different from the Asiatics. If they be not free, they are at least not entirely degraded to slavery. They, therefore, may know what virtue is, and esteem it.

## CHAP. XIII.

### OF THE MANNER IN WHICH THE GREATEST PART OF EUROPEANS CONSIDER VIRTUE.

The greatest part of the people of Europe honour virtue in theory: this is an effect of their education. They despise it in practice: that is an effect of the form of their governments.

If the European admire in history, and applaud on the theatre, generous actions, to which the Asiatic is frequently insensible, that is, as I have just said, the effect of his instruction.

The study of the Greek and Roman history, forms a part

Education excites an admiration of virtue.

part of his instruction. In the course of this study, what mind, without interest and without prejudice, is not affected with the same patriotic sentiments that animated the ancient heroes? Youth cannot refuse its esteem to those virtues, which consecrated by universal respect, have been celebrated by the most illustrious writers of every age.

For want of the same instruction, the Asiatic feels not the same sentiments, nor conceives the same veneration for the masculine virtues of great men. If Europeans admire them without imitation, it is because there is scarcely any government where these virtues lead to great employments, and nothing is really esteemed but power.

When I see a great character of Greece, Rome, Britain, or Scandinavia, represented in history, or on the theatre, I admire it. The principles of virtue imbibed in my infancy force me to it; and I the more readily encourage this sentiment, as I do not in any manner compare myself with this hero. If his virtue be strong and mine weak, I disguise its weakness: I refer to place, time, and circumstances, the difference I observe between him and myself. But if this great man be my fellow-citizen, why do I not imitate his conduct? His presence humbles my pride. If I can avenge myself of him, I do it: I blame in him what I applaud in the ancients. I rail at his generous actions: I depreciate his merit, and at least in appearance, despise his impotence.

Strength and power more highly honored than virtue.

My reason, which judges the virtue of the dead, obliges me to esteem in speculation the heroes who have rendered themselves useful to their country. The picture of ancient heroism produces an involuntary respect in every mind that is not entirely debased. But in my contemporary, that heroism is odious to me. I feel in his presence two contradictory sentiments, one esteem the other envy. Subject to these two different impulsions, I hate the living hero, but erect a trophy on his tomb, and thus satisfy at once my pride and my reason. When virtue is without authority, its impotence gives me a right to despise it, and I avail myself of that right. Weakness attracts scorn and insult (39).

To be honoured while we live, we must be powerful (40). Thus power is the only object of man's desire. He who had the choice of the strength of Enceladus, and the virtues of Aristides, would give the preference to the former. In the opinion of all the critics, the character of Æneas is more just and virtuous that that of Achilles. Why then does the latter excite greater admiration? Because Achilles was strong, and we have more desire to be powerful than just, and we always admire what we would be.

It is always power and importance that we seek, under the name of virtue. Why do we require on the theatre, that virtue should always triumph over vice? Whence arose that rule? From an interior and confused perception, that we only love in virtue the consideration

ration it procures. Men are seriously anxious about nothing but authority, and it is the love of power that furnishes the legislator with the means of rendering them more virtuous and more happy.

## CHAP. XIV.

### THE LOVE OF POWER IS IN MAN THE MOST FAVOURABLE DISPOSITION TO VIRTUE.

If virtue were the effect of a particular organization, or a gift of the Divinity, there would be no honest men but such as were so organized by nature, or predestined by Heaven. Laws, good or bad, forms of government, more or less perfect, would have little influence on the manners of a people. Sovereigns would not have it in their power to form good citizens, and the sublime employment of a legislator would be in some measure without functions. But if, on the contrary, we regard virtue as the effect of a desire common to all (as is the desire of command) the legislator being always able to annex esteem and riches, in a word, power, under some denomination, to the practice of virtue, it can always compel men to it. Under a good legislation, the vicious alone must then be the fools. It is therefore

The love of power is the most favourable disposition to virtue.

fore always to the greater or less absurdity of the laws, that we must attribute the greater or less stupidity or iniquity of the citizens.

Heaven, by inspiring all men with the love of power, has given them a most precious gift. What imports it whether all men be born virtuous, if all be born with a passion that will render them such.

This truth being fully proved, it is for the magistrate to discover, in the universal love that men have for power, the means of securing the virtue of the citizens, and the happiness of the nation.

As to what regards myself, I have accomplished my task if I have proved, that man directs, and ever will direct, his desires, his ideas, and his actions, to his felicity: that the love of virtue is always founded in him on the desire of happiness: that he only loves in virtue the riches and happiness which it produces; and lastly, that even including the desire of glory, all is in man nothing more than a disguised love of power. It is in this last love that there is still concealed the principle of intolerance; which is of two kinds, the one civil, the other religious.

CHAP.

Of civil intolerance.

# CHAP. XV.

## OF CIVIL INTOLERANCE.

MAN is born surrounded with pains and pleasures. If he desire the sword of power, it is to drive away the one, and to possess the other. His thirst of power is in this respect insatiable. Not content with commanding a people, he would command their opinions also: he is not less anxious to subdue the reason of his fellow-citizens, than a conqueror is to usurp the treasures, and the provinces of his neighbours.

He does not think himself truly their master if he do not bring their minds into subjection. To effect this he employs force: he at length subdues reason. Men are completely degraded by believing opinions which they are forced to profess. What reasoning begins is finished by violence.

The intolerance of monarchs is always the effect of their love of power. Not to think as they do, is to assume a power equal to theirs. By this they are enraged.

What is in certain countries the crime most severely punished? Contradiction. For what crime was the Oriental punishment of an iron cage invented in France? On whom was it inflicted? Was it some cowardly

What crimes are most severely punished by despots.

cowardly or ignorant general who conducted a siege, or defended a place badly; or who by incapacity, jealousy, or treason, suffered provinces to be ravaged? Or was it some minister who loaded the people with intolerable taxes (41) and whose edicts were destructive of the public felicity? No: the wretch condemned to this punishment, was the writer of a Dutch gazette, who criticized, perhaps too severely, the projects of some French ministers (42), and made all Europe laugh at their expence (43).

Who is suffered in Spain and Italy to rot in a dungeon? Is it a judge who sells justice, or a governor who abuses his power? No: it is the hawker who sells for bread books, in which the humility and poverty of the clergy are doubted. To whom in some countries do they give the name of a bad citizen? Is it to the thief, who purloins and dissipates the national treasure? No: such crimes go almost every where unpunished; for they every where find protectors. He alone is called a bad citizen, who in a song or an epigram laughs at the knavery or futility (44) of a man in power.

I have seen the country where the infamous person is not he who does the evil, but he who discovers the author of it. Is a house set on fire? The incendiary is caressed, and he who discovers him is punished. Under such governments, the greatest of crimes is frequently the love of our country, and a resistance to the unjust commands of those in power.

Why

Honest men are not fit for a court.

Why is merit always suspected by a weak minister? Whence arises his hatred to men of letters (45)? Because he regards them as so many torches that may discover the grossness of his blunders (46).

There was formerly about the person of a prince, a subtle fellow, who, under the denomination of a fool, was sometimes permitted to speak the truth (47). These fools disgusted: their employment has been every where suppressed, and it is perhaps the only general alteration that sovereigns have made in their dependents. These fools were the last wise men that were suffered to attend the great. If we would be admitted to their presence, and be found agreeable, we must talk as they do, and confirm them in their errors. But this is not the part of a man, sagacious, candid, and loyal. He will think for himself, and speak what he thinks; the great know it, and hate him. They find in him a boundary to their authority. It is men of this sort who are above all others prohibited from thinking and writing on matters of government. Hence it comes that kings, deprived of the advice of intelligent men, sacrifice their real and durable power to a momentary fear of contradiction. In fact, if a prince be only strong by the strength of his people; his people only strong by the wisdom of the administration, and that administration be necessarily taken from the body of the people, it is impossible under a government which persecutes the man who thinks, and where the people are all kept in darkness, that such a nation

nation should produce great ministers. The danger of acquiring instruction there destroys instruction. The people groan under the sceptre of a haughty ignorance, that soon precipitates the tyrant and his nation into one common ruin (48). This sort of intolerance is a rock, against which, sooner or later, the greatest empires are dashed in ruins.

## CHAP. XVI.

### INTOLERANCE FREQUENTLY FATAL TO PRINCES.

PRESENT power and pleasure are frequently destructive of future pleasure and power. A prince, to command with more sovereign authority, would have his subjects without ideas, without spirit, without character (42); in a word, automata, always obedient to the impression he gives them. If they become such, he will be powerful at home, and impotent abroad: he will be the tyrant of his subjects, and the contempt of his neighbours.

Such is the situation of a despotic monarch, produced by a momentary pride. He says to himself, it is over my people that I habitually exercise my power: it is therefore their opposition, that frequently recalling to my mind the idea of a want of sufficient power, makes

makes it the more insupportable. If in consequence of this, he prohibited the liberty of thought to his subjects, he by that act declares, that, indifferent to the greatness and happiness of his people, it is of little importance to him, whether be govern badly or not, but of great importance that he govern without control. Now, from the moment the strong speaks, the weak becomes silent, he bows the head, and no longer thinks; for why should he think, when he cannot communicate his thoughts?

But, it will be said, if the stupor in which fear holds the minds of men be hurtful to a state, are we to conclude that the liberty of thinking and writing is without inconvenience?

In Persia, says Chardin, they may, even in coffee-houses censure aloud, and with impunity, the conduct of the vizir; for the minister, desirous of knowing the evil he does, is sensible that he cannot know it but from the voice of the public. Perhaps there are countries in Europe more barbarous than Persia.

But still, if every one might think and write, what books would they make on subjects they do not understand! What absurdities would be published! So much the better: they would leave fewer absurdities to be committed by the vizirs. The critic would expose the errors of the author; the public would laugh at him; and that is all the punishment he would deserve. If legislation be a science, its perfection must be the work of time and experience. On any subject,

one

one excellent book supposes an infinity of bad. The tragedies of the passion must have preceded Heraclius, Phedra, Mahomet, &c. If the press cease to be free (50), the man in place, ignorant of his failings, will incessantly commit new blunders, and commit almost as many absurdities as the author penned (51). Now, it is of little importance to a nation, that an author publishes absurdities; so much the worse for him: but it is of great importance that the minister do not commit them; for if he do, so much the worse for them.

The liberty of the press is in no wise contrary to the general interest (52); that liberty is to a people the support of emulation. Who are they that should maintain this emulation? The people in power. Let them watch carefully over its preservation, for when once extinguished, it is almost impossible to kindle it again. If a people once polished fall into a state of barbarism, what can relieve them? Nothing but a conquest. That alone can give new manners to a people, and render them again powerful and renowned. If a people be degraded, let them be conquered. It is the desire of an honest citizen, a man that interests himself in the glory of his nation, who thinks himself great in its grandeur, and happy in its prosperity. The view of the despot is not the same, because he does not confound himself with his slaves: so that, indifferent to their glory and their happiness, nothing affects him (53) but their servile obedience.

The tyrant when blindly obeyed is content. If his subjects

Arbitrary governments are concerned only about the pre eat.

subjects be without virtue, if his empire be enfeebled, if it perish by a consumption, it is of little moment to him: it is enough if the duration of the disease conceal the true cause, and the physician cannot be accused of ignorance. The only fear of sultans and vizirs is, that a sudden convulsion should seize the empire. There are vizirs like surgeons, whose sole care is, that the state or the patient do not expire under their hands. If one or other of them die under a regimen prescribed, the reputation of the minister or the surgeon is safe, and they give themselves no concern about it.

In arbitrary governments all concern is confined to the present moment. They ask not of the people industry and virtue, but money and submission. The despot, the more silently to devour his people, like the spider that incessantly twines new threads round the insect which it has made its prey, loads them daily with new chains (54). When he has at last by fear suspended in them all activity, where is his resource against the attack of a neighbouring power? He does not foresee that he and his subjects must consequently soon submit to the yoke of the conqueror. But despotism foresees nothing.

Every remonstrance disgusts and irritates a despot. He resembles the ill-taught child that eats the poisonous fruit, and beats his mother who would take it from him. What account is made of a faithful and courageous citizen under such a reign? He is regarded and punished as a fool (55). What regard under such a

reign is had to a mean and bad citizen (56)? He is regarded and recompensed as a wise man. Sultans will be flattered (57), and they are. Who can constantly refuse their demands? Who, under such a government, can earnestly interest himself in the public welfare? If there be a wise man here and there in the empire, every one is deaf to his counsel. They are like lamps that burn in a sepulchre, their lights shine on no man. The tyrant confides in men grown old in attendance, and that have the spirit and manners of the court. They were flatterers of this sort, that hurried on the Stuarts to their ruin. "Certain prelates, "says an illustrious English writer, perceiving the bi- "goted weakness of James I. made use of it to per- "suade him that the public tranquillity depended on the "uniformity of public worship, that is, on certain reli- "gious ceremonies. James embraced this opinion, "and transmitted it to his descendants. What was "the consequence? The exile and ruin of his house."

"When heaven, says Velleius Paterculus, would "chastise a sovereign, it inspires him with a love of "flattery (58), and a hatred of contradiction. At that "instant the understanding of the sovereign is obscu- "red. He shuns the company of wise men, walks in "darkness, falls into a fathomless pit, and, as the Latin "proverb says, passes out of the smoke into the fire." If such be the signs of the wrath of heaven, against what sultan is it not irritated? Which among them chooses his favourites from the most faithful and intelligent of

his subjects? The philosopher Anacharsis, they say, basely flattered a king of Scythia, and was by his order pounded in a mortar; but that mortar is lost.

"What do they report of me and my government?" said an emperor of China to Confucius. Every one, "replied the philosopher, keeps a mournful silence. "That is what I would have them do, said the empe- "ror. And it is what you ought to fear, replied the "philosopher. The sick man when flattered is aban- "doned; his end is near. A monarch ought to be in- "formed of the disorder of his mind, as a sick man of "that of his body: without this liberty the state "and the prince are lost."

This answer displeased the emperor; he wanted to be praised. The present interest almost always weighs more with pride than the interest that is to come, and in this respect the people are princes.

## CHAP. XVII.

### FLATTERY IS NO LESS PLEASING TO THE PEOPLE THAN TO SOVEREIGNS.

The people, like kings, would be courted and flattered. The greatest part of the Athenian orators were nothing better than vile adulators of the populace.

Prince,

Flattery is as pleasing to the people as to monarchs.

Prince, people, individual, (59), all are greedy of praise. To what can we refer this universal passion? To the love of power.

Whoever praises a man awakens in him the idea of power, with which the idea of happiness is always connected.

Whoever contradicts him, on the contrary, awakens in him the idea of weakness, to which is always joined the idea of misfortune. The love of praise is common to all; but the people, too sensible of praise, have sometimes given the name of good patriots to their meanest flatterers. Let every man extol with transport the virtues of his country, but let him not be blind to its vices. The pupil most sincerely beloved is not the most praised. A true friend is never a flatterer.

Private persons are too much disposed to extol the virtues of their fellow-citizens; they regard it as a common cause. Adulation of our countrymen is not the measure of our love for our country; in general, every man loves those of his own country: the love of Frenchmen is natural to the French. To render me a bad citizen, the law must make me such by detaching my interest from that of the public.

The virtuous man is known by the desire he has to render his countrymen, if it be possible, more illustrious and more happy. In England the true patriots are those that exert their utmost force against the abuse of government; but to whom do they give that title in Portugal?

Portugal? To him who is the most servile flatterer of the man in power; yet what a citizen! what a patriot!

It is to a thorough knowledge of the motives of our love of flattery, and our hatred of contradiction, that we owe the solution of an infinity of moral problems, otherwise inexplicable. Why is every new truth at first so badly received? Because every truth of that sort always contradicts some opinion generally received, shews the weakness or falsehood of an infinity of judgments, and consequently an infinity of people have an interest in hating and persecuting the author.

M. Come improved the instrument used in lithotomy; it operates in a manner less dangerous and painful than the other. What of that? The pride of the celebrated surgeons was shocked; they persecuted and would have banished him from France: they solicited *a lettre de cachet*, but by chance they were refused. If the man of genius be almost every where more rigorously punished than the assassin, it is because the one has for enemies only the relations of the murdered, the other all his fellow-citizens.

I have known a devout woman ask of a minister, at the same time, the pardon of a robber, and the imprisonment of a Jansenist and Deist; what was her motive? Pride. What is it to me, she would have freely said, that they rob and murder, provided it be not me, nor my confessor; what I want is, that men be

Genius is almost universally persecuted.

religious, and that the Deist do not by his arguments shock my vanity.

By endeavouring to instruct we humiliate. Let in the light upon a nest of young owls, and they cry out against the injury you have done them. Men of mediocrity are young owls: when you present them with strong and brilliant ideas, they exclaim against them as false, dangerous, and deserving of punishment (60).

Under what prince, and in what country, can a man be great with impunity? In England, and under the reign of a Trajan or a Frederic; under every other form of government, and every other sovereign, the reward of talents is persecution. Strong and great ideas are almost every where proscribed. The authors most generally read, are those that render common ideas in a new and striking manner; they are praised because they are not worthy of praise; because they do not contradict any one. Contradiction is intolerable to all, but especially to the great. To what degree did it not excite the wrath of Charles V. against the Lutherans? That prince, they say, repented of having persecuted them; it may be so: but at what time was it? When after having abdicated the empire he lived in retreat. He then said to himself, I have thirty watches on my table, and no two of them mark precisely the same time *: how could I imagine then,

* A servant carelessly entered his cell and threw down the ta-

that

Intolerance of mankind in general.

that in matters of religion I could make all men think alike? What was my folly and my pride! Would to heaven that Charles had made this reflection sooner; he would have been more just, more tolerant, and more virtuous. What seeds of war he would have destroyed! how much human blood would he have spared!

No prince, not even any private man, assigns bounds to his power. It is not enough to reign over our fellow-citizens, and command their ideas, we would even command their tastes. M. Rousseau loves not French music; in this he agrees with all the other nations of Europe. When he published this opinion, a thousand voices were raised against him: he deserved to rot in a dungeon. They solicited a *lettre de cachet*, but the minister was luckily too prudent to grant it, and expose the French nation to ridicule.

There are no crimes to which human intolerance does not lead. To pretend in this matter to correct man, is to desire that he should prefer others to himself; that is, to desire him to change his nature. A wise man never desires impossibilities; his aim is to disarm and not destroy intolerance. But what shall restrain it? A reciprocal fear. When two men of

ble with the thirty watches; Charles laughed, and said to the servant, you are more lucky than I, for you have found the way to make them all go together.

equal force differ in opinion, neither of them insults the other? for men rarely attack those whom they think they cannot injure with impunity.

Why do military men dispute with so much politeness? for fear of a duel. Whence arises the same politeness among men of letters? From the fear of ridicule: no man likes to be confounded with the pedants of a college. Now from those two instances we may judge what the still more efficacious fear of the law would produce among citizens.

Severe laws would suppress intolerance as well as robbery. If while I have the free use of my tastes and opinions, the law forbids me to insult those of others: my intolerance then checked by the edicts of the magistrate, will not extend to acts of violence; but if through imprudence the government free me from the fear of a duel, ridicule, and the law, my intolerance unrestrained will again render me savage and inhuman. The atrocious ferocity with which different religious sects persecute each other, is a proof of what is here asserted.

CHAP.

Of religious intolerance.

# CHAP. XVIII.

## OF RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE.

THIS is the most dangerous of all intolerance; its motive is the love of power, religion its pretence. What is it they would punish in a heretic or unbeliever? The audacity of the man who would think for himself; who would believe his own reason before that of the priests, and thereby declare himself their equal. The pretence of avenging Heaven is nothing but that of his offended pride. Priests of almost all religions are the same.

In the sight of the mufti, as in that of a bonze, an infidel is an impious wretch that ought to be destroyed by fire from heaven; a man so destructive to society as to deserve to be burnt alive.

In the eyes of a wise man however, this same infidel is a man who does not believe the tale of mother Goose: for what is there wanting to make that tale a religion? A number of people to maintain its veracity.

Whence comes it that men covered with the rags of penitence and the mask of charity have been at all times the most atrocious? How can it be possible that

Ingenious parable of a celebrated painter.

light of toleration has not yet broken forth? What! must honest men hate and persecute each other without remorse for disputes about a word, frequently about the choice of errors, and because they are distinguished by the different name of Lutherans, Calvinists, Catholics, Mahometans, &c.

When in a convocation the monk anathematises the dervise, can he be ignorant that in the sight of the dervise the truly impious, the real infidel, is the Christian, pope, or monk who does not believe in Mahomet? Can each sect, eternally condemned to stupidity, approve in itself what it detests in others?

Let them sometimes recollect the ingenious parable of a celebrated painter. Transported in a dream to the gates of heaven, says he, the first object that struck me was a venerable old man; by his keys, his bald head, and his long beard, I knew him to be St. Peter. The apostle sat on the threshold of the celestial gates; a crowd of people advanced towards him; the first who presented himself was a papist; I have, said he, all my life been a religious man, and yet honest enough. Go in, replies the saint, and place yourself upon the bench for catholics. The next was a protestant, who gave a like account of himself; the saint said in the like manner, place yourself among the reformed. Then came merchants of Bagdat, Bassora, &c. these were all musulmans who had been constantly virtuous; St. Peter made them sit down among the musulmans. At last came an infidel; What is thy

sect?

sect? said the apostle. I am of no sect, he replied, but I have always been honest. Then you may go in. But where shall I seat myself? Next to those who appear to you most rational.

Would to heaven that, enlightened by this fable, men would no longer pretend to command the opinions of others! God has decreed that truth should be the recompence of inquiry. The most efficacious prayers for obtaining it are, it is said, study and application. O stupid monks! have you ever offered up those prayers?

What is truth? You do not know: yet you persecute him who, you say, knows it not, and have canonised the dragoons of Cevennes, and elevated to the dignity of a saint one Dominic, a barbarian, who founded the tribunal of the inquisition, and massacred the Albigenses (61). Under Charles IX. you made it the duty of the catholics to murder the protestants; and even in this age, so enlightened and philosophic, when the toleration recommended in the gospel ought to be the virtue of all men, there are Caveiracs who treat toleration as a crime and an indifference to religion, and who would again fain behold that day of blood and massacre, that horrid day of St. Bartholomew, when sacerdotal pride stalked through the streets commanding the death of Frenchmen; like the sultan who passed through the streets of Constantinople, followed by an executioner, demanding the blood of the Christian, who wore red breeches. More barbarous than

The Catholic and the Jewish religions the most intolerant.

the sultan, you put swords into the hands of Christians to cut the throats of each other.

O religions, (I speak here of the false), you have ever been palpably ridiculous! and even if you were merely ridiculous, the man of understanding would not expose your absurdities. If he thinks himself obliged to do it, it is because those absurdities in men armed with the sword of intolerance (63) are one of the most cruel scourges of humanity.

Among the diversity of religions, which are those that bear the greatest hatred to others? The Catholic and the Jewish. Is this hatred the effect of ambition in their ministers, or that of a stupid and ill-advised zeal? The difference between true and false zeal is remarkable; they cannot be mistaken (64). The first is all gentleness, humanity, and charity; it pardons all, and offends none. Such at least is the idea we must form of it from the words and actions of the Son of God (65).

Of the right by which heretics are persecuted.

# CHAP. XIX.

## INTOLERANCE AND PERSECUTION ARE NOT OF DIVINE COMMANDMENT.

To whom gave Jesus the appellation of a race of vipers? Was it to the Pagans, the Essenes, or Sadducees (66), who denied the immortality of the soul, and even the existence of the Divinity? No: it was to the Pharisees and Jewish priests.

Will the Catholic priests by the fury of their intolerance continue to merit the same appellation? By what right do they persecute a heretic? He does not think as we do, they will say: but to desire to unite all men precisely in the same belief, is to require them all to have the same eyes and the same complexion; a desire contrary to nature. Heresy is a name which those in power give to opinions commonly various, but contradictory to their own. Heresy, like orthodoxy, is local. The heretic belongs to a sect not predominant in the country where he lives: this man having less protection, and being consequently weaker than others, may be insulted with impunity. But why is he insulted? Because the strong persecute the weak even in their opinions.

If the ministers of Neufchatel, the accusers of M. Rousseau

Rousseau (67), had been born Athenians or Jews, they would, by virtue of being the strongest, in like manner have persecuted Socrates or Jesus. Oh, eloquent Rousseau! regard the favour of the great prince who protects you against such fanatics as a full recompence for their insults! you must have blushed at the approbation of those wretches; it would have inferred some analogy between your ideas and theirs, and have stained your talents. You were persecuted in the name of the Divinity, but not by him.

Who more forcibly opposed intolerance than the Son of God? His apostles would have had him call down fire from heaven on the Samaritans; he reproved them sharply. The apostles, still animated with the spirit of the world, had not then received that of God; scarcely were they enlightened when they became proscribed, not proscribers.

Heaven has given to no one the power to massacre a heretic. John does not command the Christians to arm themselves against the Pagans: (68) *Love one another,* he repeats incessantly, *for such is the will of God; by observing this precept you fulfil the law.*

Nero, I know, persecuted among the first Christians men of a different opinion from his own; but Nero was a tyrant, horrible to humanity. They who commit the same barbarities, who violate without remorse the natural and divine laws, which command us *to do unto others as we would they should do unto us,* ought equally to be accursed of God and man.

They

In religion every man has a right to think for himself.

They who tolerate intolerants render themselves guilty of their crimes. If a church complain of being persecuted, when its right to persecute is opposed, the prince should be deaf to its complaints. The church ought to regulate its conduct by that of the Son of God. But Jesus and his apostles left to men the free exercise of reason. Why then does the church forbid them the use of it? No man has authority over the noble function of my mind, that of judging for myself, any more than over the air I breathe. Shall I abandon to others the care of thinking for me? I have my own conscience, reason, and religion, and do not desire to have the conscience, reason, or religion of the pope. I will not model my belief after that of another, said an archbishop of Canterbury. Each one is to answer for his own soul; it therefore belongs to each one to examine,

*What he believes;*
*On what motive he believes:*
*What is the belief that appears to him the most rational.*

What! said John Gerson, chancellor of the university of Paris, has heaven given me a soul, a faculty of judging, and shall I submit it to that of others; and shall they guide me in my manner of living and dying?

But ought a man to prefer his own reason to that of a nation? Is such a presumption lawful? Why not? If Jupiter should again take in hand the balance with which he formerly weighed the destiny of heroes; if

in

In religion every man has a right to think for himself.

in one scale he should put the opinion of Locke, Fontenelle, Bayle, &c. and in the other that of the Italian, French, and Spanish nations, the last scale would rise up, as if loaded with no weight. The diversity and absurdity of different forms of worship shew in how little esteem we ought to hold the opinion of the people. The divine wisdom itself appeared, says the scripture, a stumbling-block to the Jews, and to the Gentiles foolishness; *Judæis scandalum, gentibus stultitiam.* In matters of religion I owe no respect to the opinion of a people; it is to myself alone that I owe an account of my belief; all that immediately relates to God, should have no judge but he. The magistrate himself, solely charged with the temporal happiness of men, has no right to punish any crimes not committed against society: no prince or priest has a right to persecute in me the pretended crime of not thinking as he does.

From what principle does the law forbid my neighbour to dispose of my property, and permit him to dispose of my reason and my soul? My soul is my property. It is from nature that I hold the right of thinking, and of speaking what I think. When the first Christians laid before the nations of the earth their belief, and the motives for that belief; when they permitted the Gentiles to judge between the Christian religion and their own, and to make use of the reason given to man to distinguish between vice and virtue, truth and falsehood; the exposition of their sentiments had certainly nothing criminal in it. At what period did the Christians deserve the hatred and contempt

Force can never produce belief.

contempt of the world? When by burning the temples of the idols, they would have forced the pagans to relinquish the religion they thought the best (69). What was the design of that violence? Force imposes silence on reason; it can proscribe any worship rendered to the Divinity. But what power has it over belief? To believe supposes a motive to belief? Force is no motive. Now without motive we cannot really believe; the most we can do is to think we believe (70).

There can be no pretence for admitting an intolerance condemned by reason and the law of nature: that law is holy; it is from God; it cannot be disannulled; on the contrary, God has confirmed it by his gospel.

Every priest, who under the name of an angel of peace excites men to persecution, is not, as is imagined, the dupe of a stupid and ill-informed zeal (71); it is not by his zeal but by his ambition that he is directed.

## CHAP. XX.

### INTOLERANCE IS THE FOUNDATION OF THE GRANDEUR OF THE CLERGY.

The doctrine and practice of the priest both prove his love of power. What does he protect? Ignorance. Why?

Enmity of the priests to talents and genius.

Why? Because the ignorant and credulous, make little use of their reason, think after others, are easy to be deceived, and are the dupes of the grossest sophistry (72).

What does the priest persecute? Learning. Why? Because a man of learning will not believe without examination; he will see with his own eyes, and is hard to be deceived. The enemies of learning are the bonze, the dervise, the bramin, in short, every priest of every religion. In Europe the priests rose up against Galileo; excommunicated Polydore Virgil and Scheiner for the discovery which the one made of the antipodes, and the other of the spots in the sun. They have proscribed sound logic in Bayle, and in Descartes the only method of acquiring knowledge; they forced that philosopher to leave his country (73); they formerly accused all great men of magic (74); and now magic is no longer in fashion, they accuse those of atheism and materialism, whom they formerly burned as sorcerers.

The care of the priest has ever been to keep men at a distance from the truth: all instructive study is forbidden. The priest shuts himself up with them in a dark chamber, and carefully stops up every crevice by which the light might enter. He hates, and ever will hate, the philosopher: he is in continual fear lest men of science should overthrow an empire founded on error and intellectual darkness.

Without love for talents, the priest is a secret enemy

to

to the virtues of humanity; he frequently denies their very existence. There are, in his opinion, no virtuous actions but what are conformable to his doctrines, that is, to his interest. The first of virtues with him are faith, and a submission to sacerdotal power: it is to slaves only that he gives the name of saints and virtuous men.

What, however, are more distinct than the ideas of virtue and sanctity? He is virtuous who promotes the prosperity of his fellow-citizens: the word virtue always includes the idea of some public utility. It is not the same with sanctity. A hermit or monk imposes on himself the law of silence, flogs himself every night, lives on pulse and water, sleeps on straw, offers to God his nastiness and his ignorance, and thinks by virtue of maceration to make a fortune in heaven. He may be decorated with a glory; but if he do no good on earth, he is not honest. A villain is converted at the hour of death; he is saved, and is happy: but he is not virtuous. That title is not to be obtained but by a conduct habitually just and noble.

It is from the cloister that saints are commonly taken: but what are monks in general? Idle and litigious men, dangerous to society, and whose vicinity is to be dreaded. Their conduct proves that there is nothing in common between religion and virtue. To obtain a just idea of it, we must substitute a new morality in the place of that theological morality, which, always indulgent to the perfidious arts practised by the

different sects (76), sanctifies to this day the atrocious crimes with which the Jansenists and Molinists reciprocally charge each other (77), and which, in short, commands them to plunder their fellow-citizens of their property and their liberty.

An Asiatic tyrant would have his subjects promote his pleasures with all their power, and pay down at his feet their homage and their riches: the popish priests exact in like manner the homage and the riches of the catholics.

Are there any means of increasing their power and wealth that they have not employed? When it was necessary for that purpose to have recourse to barbarity and cruelty, they became cruel and barbarous.

From the moment the priests, instructed by experience, found that men paid more regard to fear than to love, that more offerings were presented to Ariman than Oromaza, to the cruel Molva than the gentle Jesus, it was on terror that they founded their empire. They sought to have it in their power to burn the Jew, imprison the Jansenist and Deist; and notwithstanding the horror with which the tribunal of the inquisition fills every sensible and humane soul, they then conceived the project of its establishment. It was by dint of intrigues that they accomplished this design in Spain, Italy, Portugal, &c.

The more arbitrary the proceedings of this tribunal became, the more it was dreaded. The priests, perceiving

The inquisition established by Catholics.

ceiving that the sacerdotal power increased by the terrors with which it struck the imagination of mankind, soon became obdurate. The monks, deaf with impunity to the cry of compassion, to the tears of misery, and the groans of tortures, spared neither virtue nor talents; it was by confiscation of property, by the aid of tortures and butcheries that they at last usurped over the people an authority superior to that of the magistrates, and frequently even to that of kings. The bold hand of sacerdotal ambition dared in a Christian country to lay the foundation of such a tribunal; and the stupidity of the people, and of princes, suffered it to be completed,

Are there no longer in the Catholic church a Fenelon or a Fitzjames, who, touched with the misfortunes of their brethren, behold this tribunal with horror? There are still Jansenists virtuous enough to detest the inquisition, even though it should burn a Jesuit; but in general men are not at once religious and tolerant: humanity supposes intelligence.

A man of an enlightened mind knows that force makes hypocrites, and persuasion Christians; that a heretic is a brother, who does not think as he does on certain metaphysical dogmas: that this brother, deprived of the gift of faith, is to be pitied, not persecuted (78); and that if no one can believe that to be true, which appears to him to be false, no human power can command belief.

The consequence of religious intolerance is the misery

of nations. What sanctifies intolerance? Sacerdotal ambition. The excessive love of the monk for power produces his excessive barbarity. The monk, cruel by system, is still more so by education. Weak, hypocritical, cowardly by situation, every Catholic priest in general must be atrocious (79); so that in countries subject to his power he exercises perpetually all that the most refined cruelty and injustice can imagine. If, while professing a religion instituted to inspire gentleness and charity, he became the instrument of persecutions and massacres; if, reeking with the blood spilt at an *auto da fe*, he ventures at the altar to raise his murderous hands to Heaven, let no one wonder: the monk is as he ought to be. Covered with the blood of a heretic, he regards himself as the avenger of the divine wrath. But can he at such a time implore the clemency of Heaven? Can his hands be pure because the church has declared them so? What community has not legitimated the most abominable crimes, when they served to increase its power?

The approbation of the church is sufficient to sanctify any crime. I have regarded the different religions, and have seen their several followers snatch the torch from each other's hands to burn their brethren; I have seen the several superstitions serve as footstools to ecclesiastical pride. Who is then, I have said to myself, the truly impious? Is it the infidel? No: the ambitious fanatic (80). It is he who persecutes and murders his brethren; it is he who, wishing to execute

cute the vengeance of Heaven on the infernal regions, anticipates that horrid function on earth; who, regarding an infidel as a damned soul, is desirous by a violent death to hasten his perdition, and by an unheard-of progression of cruelty, to cause his brother to be at the same instant arrested, imprisoned, judged, condemned, burned and damned.

## CHAP. XXI.

THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF SUPPRESSING IN MAN THE SENTIMENT OF INTOLERANCE. MEANS OF COUNTERACTING ITS EFFECTS.

The leaven of intolerance is indestructible. It is only practicable to suppress its increase and action. Severe laws ought therefore to be employed in restraining it, as they do robbery.

Does it regard personal interest? The magistrate, by preventing its action, will bind the hands of intolerance; and why should they be unbound, when, under the mask of religion, intolerance will exercise the greatest cruelties?

Man is by nature intolerant. If the sun of reason enlighten him for a moment, he should seize the opportunity to bind himself down by wise laws, and put himself in a happy state of impotency, that he may

not injure others if he should be again seized with the rage of intolerance.

Good laws can equally restrain the furious devotee, and the perfidious priest. England, Holland, and a part of Germany are proofs of this truth. Multiplied crimes and miseries have opened the eyes of the people on this subject: they have perceived that liberty of thought is a natural right; that thinking produces a desire of communicating our thoughts, and that in a people, as an individual, indifference in this matter is a sign of stupidity,

He who does not feel the want of thought never thinks. It is with the body as with the mind; if the faculties of the one or the other are not exerted they become impotent. When intolerance has weighed down the minds of men, and has broken their spring, they then become stupid, and darkness is spread over a nation.

The touch of Midas, the poets say, turned every thing into gold; the head of Medusa transformed every thing into stone: intolerance, in like manner, transforms into hypocrites, fools, and ideots (81), all that it finds within the sphere of its attraction. It was intolerance that scattered in the East the first seeds of stupidity, which since the institution of despotism have there sprung up. It is intolerance that has condemned to the contempt of the present and future ages all those superstitious countries whose inhabitants in fact

fact appear to belong rather to the class of brutes than of men.

There is only one case in which toleration can be detrimental to a people, and that is when it tolerates a religion that is intolerant, such as the Catholic (82). This religion, becoming the most powerful in a state, will always shed the blood of its stupid protectors; it is the serpent that stings the bosom which has warmed it. Let Germany beware! its princes have an interest in embracing popery; it affords them respectable establishments for their brothers, children, &c. These princes becoming Catholics would force the belief of their subjects, and if they found it necessary, would again make human blood to stream; the torch of superstition and intolerance would again blaze. A light breath would kindle it, and set all Europe in flames. Where would the conflagration stop? I know not. Would Holland escape? Would the Briton himself, from the height of his rocks, for any long time brave the Catholic fury? The straits of the sea would prove an impotent barrier against the rage of fanaticism. What could hinder the preaching up of a new croisade, and the arming of all Europe against England, the invasion of that country, by the Catholics and their treating the Britons as they formerly treated the Albigenses!

Let not the insinuating manner of the Catholics impose on the Protestants. The same priest who in

Prussia regards intolerance as an abomination, and an infraction of the natural and divine law, looks on toleration in France as a crime and a heresy (83). What renders the same man so different in different countries? His weakness in Prussia, and his power in France.

When we consider the conduct of Catholic Christians, they at first, when feeble, appear to be lambs; but when strong, they are tygers.

Will the nations, instructed by past misfortunes, never see the necessity of restraining fanaticism, and of banishing from every religion the monstrous doctrine of intolerance? What is it at this hour that shakes the throne of Turkey, and ravages Poland? Fanaticism. It is this that prevents the Catholic Poles from admitting the Dissenters to a participation of their privileges, and makes them prefer war to toleration. In vain do they impute the present miseries of those countries merely to the pride of the nobility; without religion the great could never have armed the nation, and the impotence of their pride would have preserved peace in their country. Popery has been the secret cause of the miseries of Poland.

At Constantinople it is the fanaticism of the Mussulmans, that by loading the Greek Christians with ignominy, has armed them in secret against the empire which they ought to have defended.

Would to heaven that these two examples now before us, and glaring with the evils produced by religi-

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Men should be judged by their actions and not by their opinions.

ous intolerance, may be the last of the kind; and that hereafter, indifferent to all modes of worship, governments may judge men by their actions, and not by their opinions; that they may regard virtue and genius as the only recommendations to public favour; and be convinced that it is not of a Romish, Turkish, or Lutheran mechanic, but of the most skilful workman that we should purchase a watch: in short, that it is not to extensive faith, but to superior talents, that offices ought to be intrusted.

As long as the doctrine of intolerance subsists, the moral world will contain within its bosom the seeds of new calamities. It is a volcano half extinguished, that may one day blaze forth with greater violence, and produce fresh conflagrations and destruction.

Such are the fears of a citizen, who, the sincere friend of mankind, earnestly wishes their happiness.

I think I have sufficiently proved in this section, that in general all the factitious passions, and civil and religious intolerance in particular, are nothing more in man than a disguised love of power. The long detail into which the proofs of this truth have led me, has doubtless made the reader forget the motives that forced me into this discussion.

My object was to shew, that if in man all the passions above cited be factitious, all men are in consequence susceptible of them. To make this truth still more evident, I shall here present him with the genealogy of the passions.

The genealogy of the passions.

# CHAP. XXII.

## THE GENEALOGY OF THE PASSIONS.

MAN is animated by a principle of life, which is corporeal sensibility: this sensibility is produced by a love of pleasure and a hatred for pain: it is from those two sentiments united in man, and always present to his mind, that is formed what we call the passion of self-love (84). The love of self produces the desire of happiness, the desire of happiness that of power, and the love of power gives birth to envy, avarice, ambition, and in general all those factitious passions*(85), that under various denominations are nothing more than a love of power disguised, and are applied to the several means of attaining it.

* Passions, like elements, tho' born to fight,
Yet, mixed, and softened, in his work unite
Love, hope, and joy, fair pleasure's smiling train,
Hate, fear, and grief, the family of pain;
These mixed with art, and to due bounds confined,
Make and maintain the balance of the mind:
The lights and shades, whose well accorded strife
Gives all the strength and colour of our life. POPE.

T.

Conclusions from the positions already laid down.

These means being different, we see man, according to his situation or the form of government under which he is placed, advance to power by the path of riches, intrigue, ambition, glory, talents, &c. but invariably directing his steps toward that point.

If we here recollect what is said in the second, third, and fourth sections of this work, which is,

1. That all men have an equal aptitude to understanding.

2. That this equal aptitude is a dead power in them, when not vivified by the passions.

3. That the passion of glory is that which most commonly sets them in action.

4. That all men are susceptible of it in countries where glory conducts to power.

The general conclusion I thence deduce is, that all men organised in the common manner may be animated by the sort of passion proper to elevate them to the highest truths.

The only objection that remains for me to answer is the following. All men, it will be said, may love glory (86), but can this passion be carried by each of them to a degree of force sufficient to put in action the equal aptitude they have to understanding?

To resolve this question, I will suppose that I have concentered all my happiness in the possession of glory; this passion being then as lively in me as the love of myself, will necessarily be confounded in me with that sentiment. It is required therefore to prove,

that

that the passion of self-love, common to all men, is the same in all; and that it may at least endow them all with that energy and force of attention that is requisite to the acquiring of the greatest ideas.

## CHAP. XXIII.

### OF THE FORCE OF THE SENTIMENT OF SELF-LOVE.

The sentiment of self-love, differently modified in different men, is essentially the same in all. This sentiment is independent of the greater or less perfection of the organs. A man may be deaf, blind, lame, and infirm, and yet have the same solicitude for his preservation, the same aversion to pain, and the same love of pleasure.

Neither the force nor weakness of temperament, nor the perfection of the organs, augments or diminishes in us the force of the sentiment of self-love. Women have no less love for themselves than men, and yet have not the same organization. If there were a way to measure the force of this sentiment, it would be by its *constancy*, its *unity*, and if I may so say, its *habitual presence*; now in all these respects the sentiment of self-love is the same in all men.

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Self-love is equally strong in all men.

It is this sentiment that sometimes arms men with an obstinate courage, as with a sword, to triumph over the greatest obstacles, and at others gives them a prudent fear, as a shield, to skreen them from danger; in a word, it is this sentiment that, always occupied in promoting the happiness of each individual, watches incessantly over his preservation. Now if the love of self be in this respect the same in all, all are therefore susceptible of the same degree of passion, and consequently of the degree proper to put in action the equal aptitude they have to understanding. But admitting, for a moment, that the sentiment of self-love acts not so strongly in one as in another: it is certain that this difference, not yet perceived by experience, must be consequently very small, and that it can have no influence on the mind.

A mechanician turns aside no more of a river than is necessary to move the wheels and the machinery placed on its banks; he lets the rest of the water run into the sea. In like manner it is not necessary to turn aside any more of the whole sentiment of self-love than the part necessary to put in action the equal aptitude all men have to understanding. Now this portion is considerably less than is imagined. If we consult experience in this matter, it will teach us that the fear of the rod, or a punishment still more slight, is sufficient to excite in a child the attention necessary for the attainment of languages (87). Now this sort of

of attention is either the most, or at least one of the most laborious and fatiguing of all others*.

Experience teaches us also that all our discoveries are the gifts of chance; that we owe to chance the first hint of every new truth; that all truths of this sort are, if I may so express myself, caught involuntarily; that their discovery, for this reason, has always been regarded as an inspiration, and consequently that there is no poet or philosopher whom the harmony, brilliancy, perspicuity, and precision of expression, have not cost more time and pains than his most happy ideas.

Hence it results, that all men organized in the common manner are susceptible of the degree of attention requisite for raising themselves to the highest truths, and that on the hypothesis that the sentiment of self-love is not the same in all men, (an hypothesis doubtless impossible,) the small difference that is found in this respect among them, cannot have any influence on their understandings.

In fact, if we suppose self-love to be stronger in some than in others, yet this passion, as experience proves, will not be less equally habitual in them. Now

* If the study of their native tongue appear in general less laborious to children than the study of geometry, it is because children find more habitually the necessity of talking, than of comparing geometrical figures; and the perception of the necessity of attention renders it continually less disagreeable and laborious.

It is nevertheless equally habitual in all.

if all superiority of understanding* depends less on a lively than an habitual attention, it is evident on this supposition, that all men must be still endowed with the degree of passion proper to put in action the equal aptitude they have to understanding.

* When I mention the understanding or judgment, the reader, clearly to conceive my ideas, should recollect that the understanding is the produce of the attention, and the attention that of any passion whatever, but especially of glory. In vain does chance or education offer us, in reading, conversation, &c. objects of comparison from which new ideas might result; those objects will be to us barren seeds, if attention do not render them fertile, that is, if we have not an interest, a lively desire, to compare them, and observe the resemblances and differences, the agreements and disagreements which those objects have with each other and with us.

If it is frequently said of a great man that he is the child of misfortune, it is because in general being continually forced to struggle with adversity, a man becomes more thoughtful and acute; he is therefore always what his situation makes him. But is adversity so salutary as is supposed? Yes: in the prime of life, when a habit of thinking and reflecting may be yet acquired. That age passed, misfortune afflicts a man but affords him little information. *Adversity*, says the Scotch proverb, *is wholesome at breakfast, indifferent at dinner, and mortal at supper.* Besides adversity frequently excites in us only a lively effervescence, that is often transient. A passion for glory is more durable, and for that reason more proper to produce great men and form great talents.

CHAP.

Success attends constant rather than vehement desires.

# CHAP. XXIV.

## THE DISCOVERY OF GREAT IDEAS IS THE EFFECT OF CONSTANT ATTENTION.

A VEHEMENT desire frequently occasions an effort of the mind more lively than lasting. Now the acquisition of great talents supposes an obstinate application, and a desire of instruction more habitual than vehement.

However engaged people of the world may be with their fortune and their pleasure, they feel by intervals the desire of glory. But why does this desire prove fruitless to them? Because it is not sufficiently durable. It is to the constancy of desires that great success is annexed. If an Agnes always deceives an Arnolph, it is because the desire of a woman to meet a lover is always more habitual than the desire of preventing it is in those that watch over her.

The inhabitants of Kamschatka are in some things of an unequalled stupidity; in others they have a marvellous industry. In the making of clothes, says their historian, they surpass the Europeans*. Why? Because,

* If the inhabitants of Kamschatka surpass us in certain acts

All are susceptible of the passions that inspire great ideas.

inhabiting one of the most inclement climates of the earth, they are most habitually sensible of the want of covering. Now an habitual want always produces industry. A man who is sensible of the value of consideration, that it procures power, (the common object of the desire of men), will do his utmost to attain it. It is in the possession of this esteem that he centres all his happiness, and it is then that the desire of glory is identified with the love of ourselves. Now this last sentiment, as is proved by experience, being habitually present to all men, must endow them with that sort of attention to which the superiority of the understanding is annexed.

All men organized in the common manner are therefore susceptible not only of passions, but of the habitual degree of passions, sufficient to elevate them to the highest ideas.

Whence then proceeds the extreme inequality of understandings? Because nobody sees precisely (88) the same objects; nor is precisely in the same situation (89); nor has received the same education; and be-

they may equal us in all. Talents are nothing more than different applications of the same understanding to different subjects.

He that can lift a pound of feathers or wool, can lift a pound of iron or lead. The difference therefore perceived between the industry of the inhabitants of Kamschatka, and ours, arises from the different wants that a savage or polished nation must feel in different climates.

cause,

The inequality of understandings proceed from education.

cause, finally, chance, that presides over our instruction, does not conduct all men to mines equally rich and fruitful.

It is therefore to education, taken in the fullest extent that we can understand the term, and in which the idea of chance is also included *, that we are to refer the inequality of understandings.

To complete the proofs of this truth, it only remains for me to shew, in the following section, the errors and contradictions into which they fall, who on this subject adopt principles different from mine.

I shall take M. Rousseau for an example. He is of

* Because chance has always a part in our instruction, are we thence to infer the inutility of education? No: education will never make all the inhabitants of a nation men of superior understanding; but by improving it, by inventing new means of exciting in us the desire of glory, and putting men frequently in situations where chance places them rarely, there is no doubt that its empire may be greatly contracted.

There are in Rome conservatories or schools of music, whence constantly issued good musicians, and in which are every year formed some men of genius. At Paris there is also a school for bridges and public roads that produces intelligent artists, among whom are found some men of superior talents.

An excellent education may therefore increase the talents of a nation, and may make of the meanest of the people men of sense and intelligence. Now those advantages of an improved education are sufficient to encourage men to the study of a science, the perfection of which is in part connected with the happiness of humanity.

all

Intention of the author to examine Rousseau's opinions.

all others the writer who in his works has treated this question with the most acuteness and eloquence. I shall therefore discuss his principal opinions; and if I demonstrate their fallacy and contradiction, I imagine that the public then less attached to its ancient prejudices, will judge of my principles without partiality, and will find itself in that calm and happy disposition which leads men to adopt every just idea, however paradoxical it may at first appear.

# NOTES.

1. (page 280.) Some have regarded the impetuosity of attack in a battle, as one of the characteristics of the French: but this impetuosity they possess in common with the Turks, and in general with all nations not accustomed to a severer discipline. The French, however, are susceptible of it. The king of Prussia has some of them in his army, and all are there exercised in the Prussian manner.

2. (p. 281.) The words loyal and polished are not the same. A people of slaves may be polished. The habit of fear will make them reverential. Such a people are often more civil, and always less loyal, than one that is free. The merchants of all nations attest the loyalty of the English traders. The man that is free, is in general a man of probity.

3. (p. 282.) In a degraded nation, we do not find, even among the first of the citizens, characters of a certain elevation. Free and bold spirits would be there too discordant from the others.

4. (ibid.) Who is the man the most extolled in the East? The greatest tyrant: he is the man most feared and most detested. This tyrant, so much praised while living, may, therefore, always think himself the idol and delight of his people. If history draw his portrait truly, it must be a long time after his death. What method then has an Eastern monarch to know, if he really carries with him to the tomb the esteem and regret of his subjects? He has but one: which is to reflect within himself, and examine, if he be always employed in promoting the happiness of his people, and if in all his actions he have never consulted any thing but the national interest.

interest. Has he been always indifferent about it? He may rest assured, whatever eulogy they give him, that his name will be despised by posterity. Death is the spear of Ithuriel; it destroys the charm of falsehood and flattery.

Disgrace operates in the same manner on a vizir, as death does on a sultan. While the former is in place, there are no eulogies with which he is not loaded, no talents that are not ascribed to him; but when discharged, he is, as he was before his elevation, frequently one of the meanest of the people.

5. (p. 282.) Can an arbitrary monarch, always regardless of his foreign enemies, flatter himself that a people habituated to tremble at the scourge of his power, and base enough tamely to suffer themselves to be plundered of their property, their lives, and their liberty, will defend him against the attack of a powerful enemy? A monarch ought to know, that in dividing the chain which unites the interest of each individual with the general interest, he destroys all virtue, and that when the virtue of an empire is once destroyed, it is soon precipitated into ruin; that the props of a despotic throne must sink under its weight; that merely strong in the strength of his army, that army once defeated, his subjects, freed from their fears, will no longer fight for him; that two or three battles have in the East decided the fate of the greatest empires. Witness Darius, Tigranes, and Antiochus. The Romans fought four hundred years to subjugate Italy, when free, but to conquer servile Asia they only presented themselves before it.

6. (p. 283.) The despot, for his glory and his security, ought to regard as his friends, those very philosophers whom he hates; and as his enemies, those courtiers whom he cherishes, and whose vile flatteries of his vices excite him to crimes that lead on to his perdition.

7. (ibid.) By what sign do we distinguish an arbitrary from a legitimate power? Both make laws; both *inflict capital* or inferior punishments on the violators of those laws. Both employ the power of the community, that is, the power of the nation, to maintain their edicts, or repel the attack of an enemy. True: but

they differ, says Locke, in this; the first employs the public authority to gratify his caprice or enslave the inhabitants, and the other employs it to render himself respected by his neighbours, to secure to the inhabitants their property, their laws, and their liberty. In short, the employment of the national force to any other purpose than the general welfare is a crime. It is therefore the different manner of employing the national force that distinguishes the arbitrary from the legitimate power.

8. (p. 284.) Despotism appeared in such a light to the virtuous Tullius, the seventh king of Rome, that he had the courage to fix himself the bounds of the royal authority.

9. (ibid.) Among the various causes of the little success of France, in the last war, when we reckon the jealousy and inexperience of the generals, and their indifference for the public welfare, perhaps we should not forget the gangrene of religious slavery, which began at that time to spread itself over all minds. The Frenchman now no longer dares to think for himself. From day to day, he thinks less, and will, from day to day, become less respectable.

10. (p. 289.) The love of power is such, that in England itself there is scarcely a minister who would not invest his prince with arbitrary power. The intoxication of a great place, makes the minister forget, that weighed down by the power he erects, he and his posterity will perhaps be its first victims.

Why do men seek great employments? Is it from a desire of doing good? He that is not animated by this motive, must regard them as burdens. When men desire them, it is less for public utility than their own. Men are not, therefore, born so good as some pretend. Goodness supposes a love of others, and it is in ourselves only we center all our love.

11. (p. 290.) The desire of power is general, and if to obtain it all men do not expose themselves to the same dangers, it is because the love of self-preservation is in the greatest part of them an equipoise to their love of power.

12. (p. 291.) In almost every country, force is preferred to justice.

justice. In France, they make the advocate pay taxes, but not the lieutenant. Why? Because one is to a certain degree the representative of justice, and the other of power.

13. (p. 292.) Who are the enemies of an illustrious man? His rivals, and almost all his contemporaries. His presence humbles them. By whom is he praised? By the stranger; he is without envy: he makes a part of living posterity: the distance of place equals that of time. The approbation of strangers is to a man of letters almost the only recompence that he can now expect.

14. (p. 297.) When we are inwardly constrained to acknowledge another to have a superior understanding, we hate him; his presence is disgusting: we would be revenged and get rid of him: for that purpose we force him to leave his country, like Descartes, Bayle, Maupertuis, &c. or we persecute him like Montesquieu, Diderot, &c.

There is no great man, they say, in the eyes of his wife, or his valet de chambre. I really believe it. How can we continually live with a man whom we are too often forced to admire? In this case, we must either leave him, or cease to esteem him. Riches and dignities may for a time impose silence on envy; but then it is secretly irritated. We are unwilling that a man already our superior by birth and dignity, should also excel us in talents. Does a man write like Frederic? We ridicule in him the talents for writing which we admire in Cæsar, Cicero, &c. we see him with regret establish his merit by a good work. But is not his conversation alone sufficient to prove his genius? No: in conversation the ideas succeed so rapidly, that we have not time to consider them in every light, nor to see their propriety; besides the tone and gesture of the speaker, and the disposition of the hearer, may all help to impose on us. We may therefore always dispute a merit of this sort; we do, and console ourselves by it.

Perhaps in order to be loved we ought to deserve but little esteem; all superiority attracts awe and aversion. Why does affa-

bility render merit supportable? Because it makes a man in some degree despicable.

A reserved merit gives at once a disposition to respect and hatred, and an affable merit a disposition to love and contempt. He who would be caressed by those that surround him should be content with little esteem. We pardon merit by forgetting it. Great talents have some admirers and few friends. The secret and general desire of the majority is not that genius exalt itself, but that folly be extended.

15. (p. 298.) From what motive do men purchase satirical pamphlets? From the scandal they cast on great men, and the praises they give to those of little ability. Human nature is not changed in this respect. If the Athenians, says Plutarch, so hastily advanced young Cymon to the highest offices, it was to mortify Themistocles; they were tired of esteeming the same man so long together. Why do we extol to excess rising talents? Frequently to depress those already in esteem. When we penetrate, says Plutarch, profoundly into the human heart, and see its principal motives, we find that the desire of obliging one man arises less from the pleasure of serving him, than the gratification of envy in depreciating another.

16. (ibid.) Fathers in general, though honest, yet ignorant, see with impatience their sons frequent the company of men of letters, and give their society the preference to all others: their paternal pride is thereby mortified.

17. (ibid.) If, as they say, letters and philosophy be in France without protectors, we may, without the spirit of prophecy, affirm that the succeeding generation will be without learning or genius; and that of all the arts, those of luxury will alone be cultivated.

18. (p. 299.) Violence and persecution are in general proportioned to the merit of the persecuted. In every country illustrious men have undergone disgrace. It is scarcely one hundred and fifty years since a man in England could not have been with impunity a great man.

19. (ibid.) Few authors think for themselves. The greatest part

part of books are made after other books; yet he that has not a manner of his own, ought not to expect esteem from posterity.

20. (p. 299.) Formerly all men bowed down before the ancients, and whoever in secret preferred Tasso to Virgil or Homer never owned it. What reason however have we for concealing our opinion, when we do not give it as a law? What better than the diversity of opinions, can improve the taste of the public?

21. (ibid) When princes or magistrates regard the opinion of posterity, they commonly merit its esteem; they will be just in their edicts and their sentences. It is the same with authors. When a writer has posterity present to his mind, his manner of comparing objects becomes great; he discovers important truths, and he secures to himself the general esteem, because he writes for men of all ages and all countries.

22. (p. 300.) The theological libel intitled the Censure of Bellisarius, excites horror by the barbarity and cruelty of its assertions; it always recals to my mind that fine verse of Racine.

Eh quoi, Mathan! d'un prêtre est cela le langage?
What, Mathan! is this the language of a priest?

23. (ibid.) The citizens to whom we owe the greatest respect are, first, those generals and ministers whose valour or sagacity have secured the grandeur or felicity of empires. The next most useful citizens are such as improve the arts and sciences, supply the wants of men, or preserve them from discontent. Why then do we shew more respect to a man of wealth or power than to a great mathematician, poet, or philosopher? Because our first respect is for a power or possession to which we constantly join the idea of happiness and pleasure.

Power is the idol of youth, and even of those of maturer age; so long as they can twine the myrtles with their laurels.

If power be sometimes disdained by age, it is because it no longer affords its former advantage.

24. (p. 304.) It is at the period that men, by increasing, are

forced to manure the earth, that they perceive the necessity of securing to the labourer his harvest, and the property of the land he cultivates. Before cultivation it is no wonder that the strongest should think he has as much right over a piece of barren ground as the first occupier.

25. (p. 305.) A resistance to him who is possessed of power is reputed sedition and a crime even in polished nations. No proof of this can be more clear than the complaint an English merchant made to the house of commons: "Gentlemen, said he, you can "never imagine how perfidiously the negroes treat us; their "wickedness is so great, that on some of the coasts of Africa they "prefer death to slavery. When we have bought them, they "stab themselves, or plunge into the sea; which is so much loss "to the purchasers. Judge By this action of the perversity of "that abominable race."

26. (p. 307.) At what time do a people violate the law of nations? When they can do it with impunity. Rome while weak was equitable and virtuous: when it had conquered Macedonia no nation could resist it: then become more strong it ceased to be just. Its inhabitants were from that time without honour, and without faith. The powerful are always unjust. Justice between nations is constantly founded on a reciprocal fear, and hence that political axiom: *If you desire peace, prepare for war. Si vis pacem, para bellum.*

27. (p. 309.) Aristotle places robbery among the different kinds of hunting; and Solon, among the several professions, reckons that of theft: he observes only that we should not rob either our fellow-citizens, or the allies of our republic. Rome, under the first of her kings, was a den of robbers. The Germans, says Cæsar, regard devastation and pillage as the only exercise proper for youth; and the only one that can keep them from idleness, and make them finished men.

28. (ibid.) There is, they say, a law of nations between the English, French, Germans, Italians, &c. I believe it. The fear of reprisals will establish it among nations of a force nearly equal; but

but when they are freed from that fear, and have to do with a savage people, from that moment the law of nations appears to them nothing more than a chimera.

Is it for the Christians to talk of the law of nations, the law of nature and of virtue? They, who without any injury received from the Indians of the East, invade their coasts, lay waste their cities, and drive out the inhabitants, who with their European merchandize carry to the African towns a spirit of discord, and availing themselves of the wars they have kindled, purchase the vanquished for slaves, who without offence, or even the appearance of offence on the part of the western Indians, landed in America, destroyed the palaces of Montezuma and the Incas, massacred their subjects, and seized on their dominions, without regard to the law, *primo occupanti*.

The church boasts of causing treasures that have been stolen to be restored; but has it caused the empires of Mexico and Peru to be restored to their legal proprietors? Has it not on the contrary, in concert with princes, pillaged the new world? Has it not enriched itself with the spoils, and by its conduct brought into contempt those precepts of the natural law, which it says are engraved on every heart by the hand of God?

What can be more absurd and pitiful than the morality of the church? If a prince take a mistress, it is in their opinion a matter of indifference, if she do not oppose the projects of the church, for then the priests cry aloud against the impiety. But if the same prince carry war and devastation among a people that have not offended him, if he cause 400,000 men to perish in an expedition, and bow down his people with taxes, the priests are silent. Curious morality this of the catholic church!

29. (p, 310.) Men love justice, they say; but the magistrates are the instruments of justice, and charged by the state to administer it; they therefore ought, above all, to protect innocence. But do they in reality protect it? A criminal cause is conducted in two different manners in Spain and in England: that in which an advocate is given to the accused, and where his trial is conducted

ducted in a public manner, is without doubt that where innocence is most protected against the corruption and partiality of the judges, and consequently the best. Why then is it not adopted? Why do not the magistrates solicit its admission? Because they imagine that the more arbitrary their sentences are, the more fear they will inspire, and the more authority they will have over the people. The so much boasted love of equity is not therefore either natural or common to men. Now, how can we call them the friends of humanity, when they are not even friends to justice?

30. (p. 310.) The idea of happiness is so closely connected in the mind with that of power, that they are not without difficulty separated. We respect even the appearance of power: it is to this sentiment that we owe perhaps a certain admiration of suicide. We imagine him to be possessed of great power who can so despise life as to put himself to death. To what cause but the love of power can we attribute the excessive hatred of women for men of a certain inclination? Alexander, Socrates, Solon, and Catinat* were heroes, faithful friends, and worthy citizens: a man may therefore have this inclination, and be useful to his family and his country. Whence then proceeds the horror of women for men suspected of it? Because they have less power over them. Now this defect of power is to them insupportable; they are so many slaves to it, at least in their empire, men of this sort are therefore guilty of a crime that death alone can expiate.

31. (ibid.) It is power that makes one monarch respected by another. While Philip II. was busied in his closet, he called for a servant, and nobody came; his fool laughed. What do you laugh at? said the king. To think of the awe and fear in which you hold all

* That those men were really addicted to this perverse inclination seems to be mere conjecture; it was doubtless very common in Greece, and therefore every ancient Greek is supposed to have been infected with it: just as we suppose every Dutchman to be a lover of money, and every Frenchman fond of gallantry. T.

all Europe, and of the contempt in which they would hold you if you were not powerful, and the rest of your subjects did not serve you better than your domestics.

32. (p. 311.) Princes rarely feel the enthusiasm of equity: few among them are animated with a noble love of humanity. In all antiquity Gelo alone affords an example of it. He held human sacrifices in horror; he carried the war into Africa, and obliged the vanquished Carthaginians to abolish that detestable custom. Catherine, in like manner, armed to force the Poles to toleration. Of all wars those two perhaps have been alone undertaken for the happiness of nations. Gelo and Catherine II. will therefore, in this respect, divide the esteem of posterity. If we would judge of the merit of sovereigns, we should do it, not by the little broils that may arise in their families, but by the great benefits they have done, or would have done to mankind. The desire of doing good is rare among them. The only time at which the public good commonly operates is that when the interest of the prince coincides with that of the people. At what periods have the kings of France promoted the liberty of their subjects, and weakened the feudal power? When the haughty vassals of the crown equalled themselves with their sovereigns; then the ambition of the monarchs gave freedom to the people.

Let not the princes of the East boast of their love of equity. He that would make brutes of his subjects cannot love them. It is a folly to imagine the people would be then more docile and easy to govern. The more enlightened a nation is, the more readily it submits to the just demands of an equitable administration. He that would blind his subjects, would be unjust with impunity. Such in general are men, and yet they dare to call themselves the friends of justice. O self-ignorance and hypocrisy!

33. (ibid.) Are there, as it is asserted, men who sacrifice their dearest interest to justice? No: but there are those who hold nothing dearer than justice. This generous sentiment is in them the effect of an excellent education. By what method can this principle

principle be engraved on every heart? By representing on one hand, the unjust man as base, despised, and consequently impotent; and on the other hand, the just man as esteemed, honoured, and consequently powerful.

When the idea of justice is by these means connected in the mind with those of power and happiness, they will be confounded, and form but one; and when we have a habit of recalling them together, it will soon become impossible to divide them. This habit once contracted, we shall be proud of appearing just and virtuous; and then there is nothing that we shall not sacrifice to that noble pride.

It is thus the love of power and importance begets the love of justice. This last love, it is true, is a stranger to man; that of power, on the contrary, is natural to him; it is common to all; to the honest man and the knave, the savage and the polished citizen.

The love of power is the immediate effect of corporeal sensibility, and the desire of justice is the effect of instruction: consequently, it is on the sagacity of the laws that the virtue of a people depends. How many virtuous men are there among a people where justice is respected, that would be unjust among a ferocious nation, where equity is regarded as weakness and cowardice? Men therefore do not love equity for itself. This question has been at all times decided by the conduct and manners of all nations, and all despots.

34. (p. 315.) Under a feudal government who are the tyrants? The lords. Tyrants therefore, they will say, are more numerous here than under a despotic government. I doubt it. The sultan has under him vizirs, pachas, beys, receivers and directors of taxes, with an infinity of underlings and sub-tyrants, who are still more indifferent to the happiness of the vassals than the proprietors.

35. (p. 320.) In England, if iniquity in a great man be despised by low people, it is because those people, being protected by the law, have nothing to fear from the great. If in every other

 country

NOTES ON SECTION IV.

country the vices of the great be on the contrary respected, it is because vice is there armed with power, and power we can abhor and not despise.

36. (p. 321.) Attila, as well as Thamas, gloried in being the scourge of the Almighty.

37. (ibid.) Seditious and rebellious are the injurious titles which the powerful oppressor gives to the impotent oppressed.

38. (p. 322.) In every empire where the momentary desire of a prince is a law, all the laws are contradictory, and there are no appearances of moral principles, either in the governors or those that are governed.

39. (p. 324.) Contempt is the portion of weakness. This is perhaps the only truth of which princes are not ignorant. If a monarch lose a province or a town, he appears despicable even in his own eyes; but if he unjustly take a town or province from his neighbour, he thinks himself respectable. He has always seen injustice honoured in the potent, and the world remain silent before power.

40. (ibid.) The strong and wicked, says an English poet, fear those only that are stronger and worse than themselves; but the just and virtuous ought to fear all men; he has all his fellow-citizens, even his very friends, for persecutors; all attack him. His virtue frees them from the fear of revenge. Humanity in him is equal to weakness in others; and under a vicious government, the good and weak are born victims to the wicked and strong.

41. (p. 328.) An English nobleman landed in Italy, travelled through the country about Rome, and embarked hastily for England. Why, he was asked, do you quit this fine country? "I "can no longer bear, said he to see the wretched looks of the "Roman peasants; their misery torments me; they have not even "a human aspect." This nobleman perhaps exaggerated; but he did not falsify.

42. (ibid.) The murder of Clytus was the disgrace of Alexander, and the punishment of the Dutch gazetteer that of the French minister.

minister. The crime of those two unfortunate men was the same; they were both imprudent enough to speak the truth. In the last century mankind were enraged at the treatment of the gazetteer. There are ages still more base, when the punishment of a man of veracity is applauded.

43. (p. 328.) When we are concerned for this gazetteer, and compare his crime with his punishment, we seem to be transported to the dominions of the sultan of the Indies, who hanged his visir for having put three grains of pepper into a cream tart. The illustrious, but unfortunate, M. Chalotois was very near suffering the same fate, it is said, for having, in like manner, put three grains of salt into a letter, written to a comptroller-general.

44. (ibid.) In France, why do they not dare to exhibit the futility of the great on the stage? Because, they say, comedies of that sort would produce little reformation; it is true. The poet who flatters himself with correcting the frivolity of the French by a ridiculous portrait is deceived. There is no filling the vessels of the Danaides. Men of sound sense are not to be formed under a government where priests and women have a powerful influence. A light and trifling spirit can alone be there cultivated; for it is that only which leads to fortune.

45. (p. 329.) It is not to his genius, but constantly to some particular event, that a man of talents owes the protection of the ignorant. If the ugly seek the company of the blind, ignorance flies that of the sharp-sighted.

46. (ibid.) An ignorant visir always views with an evil eye the man who travels into the countries of learned people and wise princes. The visir fears that the traveller on his return should despise him: an enemy to men of ability, he boasts of his contempt for them, and it is by this contempt that the stranger judges him. Great ministers and great princes have always been protectors of letters; witness the prince of Brunswick, Catherine II. Prince Henry of Prussia, &c.

47. (ibid.) It was formerly the privilege of fools sometimes to speak

speak the truth to princes; but still with what caution and at what moments! Let us imitate, says one of them, the prudence of the cats; they do not think themselves secure in an apartment till they have smelled to every corner of it.

48. (p. 330.) It is to the liberty the English and Dutch still enjoy that Europe owes the little of it that still remains. Except them there is scarcely any nation that does not groan under the yoke of ignorance and despotism. Every virtuous man, every good citizen, should therefore interest himself in the liberty of those two people.

49. (ibid.) It is only automata that despotism commands. There are no characters but a free nation. The English have one; the Eastern nations have not: fear and servility stifles it among them.

50. (p. 332.) When a government prohibits writing on matters of administration, it makes a vow of blindness, and that vow is common enough. "As long as my finances are well regulated, "and my army well disciplined, said a great prince, let who will "write against my discipline and my administration; but if I neg- "lect either of these, who knows whether I should not have the "weakness to compel such writers to silence."

51. (ibid.) When a man becomes a minister, it is no longer his time to form principles, but to apply them; carried away by the current of business, what he then learns is nothing more than details, always unknown to those that are not in place.

52. (ibid.) To limit the press is to insult the nation: to prohibit the reading of certain books is to declare the inhabitants to be either fools or slaves: such a prohibition ought to fill them with disdain. But it will be said, it is almost always after the opinion of the powerful that a book is approved or condemned; yes, at the beginning: but this first judgment is nothing; it is the voice of prejudice for or against. The judgment truly interesting to an author is the judgment of the people, after reflection, which is almost always just.

53. (ibid.)

NOTES ON SECTION IV.

53. (p. 332.) The age at which men attain great places is frequently that when attention becomes the most irksome. At that age he who compels me to study is my enemy; I seek his punishment, and wish his death. I can very well pardon a poet for his fine verses; I can read them without attention: but I cannot pardon a moralist for his acute reasonings; for the importance of the subject obliges me to reflect, and if he combats my prejudices, he wounds my pride, he robs me of my indolence, and forces me to think; now every constraint produces hatred.

54. (p. 333.) The land of despotism is fruitful in miseries as well as monsters. Despotism is the luxury of power, of no significance to the happiness of a sovereign. The very idea of this power would have made a Roman tremble. It is the terror of an Englishman. Judge Pratt says on this subject, "Let us be cautious that the study of the Italian and the French does not debase a free people."

What are in the eyes of the English the nobility of Europe? Men who join to the quality of slaves that of oppressors of the people; of citizens whom the law itself cannot protect against the man in place. A nobleman in Portugal is neither proprietor of his life, his estate, nor his liberty: he is a domestic negro, who, flogged by the immediate order of his master, despises the negro flogged by order of the overseer of a plantation. This, in almost all the courts of Europe, is the only difference between the humble citizen and the haughty nobleman.

55. (ibid.) We must either creep, or keep at a distance from the court. He who cannot live but by its favours, must degrade his nature, or die of hunger. Few men prefer the latter.

56. (p. 334.) The late king of Prussia being at supper with the English ambassador, asked him what he thought of monarchs. "In "general, he replied, I think them a worthless race: they are ig- "norant, and debauched by flattery. The only thing in which "they succeed, is riding a horse; and at the same time, of all those "that approach them, the horse is the only one that does not flatter them;

"them; for he breaks their neck if they do not manage him "well."

57. (p. 334.) The more despotic a government is, and the more degraded the minds of the people are, the more they boast of a love of their tyrant. The slaves in Morocco bless their fate and their prince, at the very time he condescends to cut their throats with his own hands.

58. (ibid.) Sovereigns corrupted by flattery are spoiled children. Habituated to command slaves, they frequently attempt to behave in the same manner to their equals, and are sometimes punished by the loss of a part of their dominions. It was this chastisement which the Romans inflicted on Tigranes, Antiochus, &c. when those tyrants dared to equal themselves to a free people.

59. (p. 336.) When a man is rich he would be admired for his wealth; when he is of quality, he would be admired for his rank; when he is well made, for his figure. It is not difficult to praise: all have something which they think commendable.

60. (p. 338.) The man of genius thinks for himself; his opinions are sometimes contrary to those commonly received; he therefore shocks the vanity of the greater number. To offend nobody we should have no ideas but those of the world: a man is then without genius and without enemies.

61. (p. 343.) The Albigenses were treated in the same manner as the Vaudois. The excess to which the rage of intolerance was carried against them is not to be conceived. The frightful picture of the barbarities exercised on the Vaudois is left us by Samuel Morland the English ambassador at Savoy, then resident on the spot. "Never, says he, did Christians commit such cruel-"ties on Christians: they cut off the heads of the barbes, (the "teachers of the people), boiled and eat them: they cut "open the bellies of the women, to the navel, with flints; "from others they cut off their breasts, broiled and eat them. "They applied fire to the private parts of some; they broke the "limbs of others, and exposed them to scorching fires; from "others they plucked off their nails with pincers; they tied men,

"half dead, to the tails of horses, and drew them in that manner "over rocks. The least of their punishments was to be thrown from "a steep rock, from whence they frequently fell among trees, to "which they hung till they perished by hunger, cold, and their "wounds. They cut some of them into a thousand pieces, and "strewed their limbs and flesh about the country. They impaled "the virgins by their private parts, and carried them about like "standards. Among others they drew a young man, named "Pelanchion, about the streets of Lucerne, which are every where "strewed with pointed flint stones; and if the pain made him lift up "his head or his hands, they were presently beat down: they at "last cut off his secret parts, and by stuffing them into his mouth, "stifled him; then cut off his head, and threw the trunk into "the river. The Catholics tore to pieces with their hands the in-"fants they snatched from the cradle. They roasted young girls "alive, cut off their breasts, and ate them. From others they cut "off the nose, the ears, and other parts of their bodies. They "filled the mouth of some with gun-powder, to which they set fire. "They flead others alive, and hung the skin before the windows of "Lucerne. They beat out the brains of others, which they roasted "or boiled, and then ate. The least punishments were to cut out "their hearts, to burn them alive, to disfigure their faces, cut them "into a thousand pieces, and then drown them. But they shewed "themselves true Catholics, and worthy Romans, when at Garig-"liano they heated an oven, and forced eleven Vaudois to throw "each other into it, till the last, whom the murderers threw in "themselves. Nothing was to be seen in all the vallies but bo-"dies dead or dying. The snow of the Alps was stained with "their blood. Here was seen a head, there a trunk, legs, arms, "bowels torn out, and a heart yet beating."

For what pretended crime did they punish the Vaudois with so much barbarity? For that of rebellion, they said. They were reproached with not having abandoned their dwellings and the place of their birth at the first order of Gastall and the pope; of not having

having exiled themselves from a country they had possessed for 1500 years, and where they had always enjoyed the free exercise of their religious worship. It is thus that the gentle Catholic religion, its gentle ministers and saints have at all times treated mankind. What could the apostles of the devil do worse?

62. (p. 344.) No man can cast a penetrative look on the various false religions, without conceiving the greatest contempt for the human race in general, and for himself in particular. What! he will say, were thousands of years necessary to convince men equally intelligent with myself of the folly of paganism? Do the Jews and the Guebres still persist in their errors! Do the Mussulmans still believe in Mahomet; and may it be thousands of years before they are convinced of the fallacy of the Koran! Man must certainly be a very weak and credulous animal, and in short, this planet of ours must be, as a wise man said, the mad-house of the universe.

63. (ibid.) Why is the clergyman generally esteemed in England? Because he is tolerant; the laws tying his hands, and giving him no share in administration: because he does not, and cannot injure any one: because the maintenance of the English clergy is not so burthensome to the state as Catholic clergy; and lastly, because in that country religion is properly nothing more than a philosophical opinion.

64. (ibid.) What I say of zeal I say also of humility. Of whatever sect we suppose a cardinal to be, he can never really think himself humble when he sets himself up at Rome for the protector of such a kingdom as France. True humility would refuse so ostentatious a title. I do not mean however to deny the stupidity of some prelates; but their ambitious pretensions prove less the ability of the clergy than the folly of the people. During my stay at Japan, said a traveller to me, whenever I heard the words Donoo-Sury-Sama, that is to say, My Lord Crane, they forced me to think on the name of some bishop.

65. (ibid.) Jesus exercised no authority upon earth. If he had desired that the sacerdotal power should command, he would have

at first left that command with his apostles. Now their successors have not yet shewn us their commission, or title to such a legacy.

66. (p. 345.) The Saducees were regarded as the most virtuous among the Jews. The word *Saduc* in Hebrew is synonimous to *just*. The Saducees therefore were, and ought to have been less hateful to God than the Pharasees: the latter demanded the death and the blood of Jesus Christ. Now incredulity is, and ever will be, less contrary to the spirit of the Gospel than inhumanity and deicide.

67. (p. 346.) To the disgrace of France, M. Rousseau has not been less persecuted at Paris than at Neufchatel. The Sorbonnists could not forgive him his dialogue of the Reasoner and Inspired. That dialogue, they say, is too bold. What answer is there to this? But the reasonings of M. Rousseau are either true or false. To refute just reasons by violence is injustice; to refute bad reasons by the same method is folly: it is to confess stupidity; to injure our own cause. Sophisms refute themselves: the truth is easily defended.

Besides what are the objections of M. Rousseau? Those that every bonze, dervis, and mandarin makes to the monk he would convert. Are those objections insoluble? What then do the monks in China? Why do they ask assistance, alms, and gratuities of princes, to defray the expence of a mission where they can make no converts? But the monks who travel over the East have no other object than to enrich themselves by commerce; they employ the treasures that have been lavished on them by the people to no other purpose than to deprive those very people of the profit of legitimate commerce. In this case what just reproaches have not the nations to make them? And what accusations can they bring against M. Rousseau? He has preached, they say, the religion of nature: but it is not contrary to that of revelation. M. Rousseau has been honest in his criticisms: he was not the author of those infamous libels intitled, *Gazette Ecclesiastique*, yet he is banished, and the novelist is tolerated. Who then were thy judges, O illustrious Rousseau? Fanatics, who would, if it

were

were in their power, blast the memory of Marcus Aurelius, Antoninus, and Trajan, and would accuse the greatest prince in Europe of his superior talents as a crime. What regard is to be paid to such judgments? None. Let us appeal to posterity, and despise all those judgments that are not pronounced by reason and equity. Posterity will judge the judges, and if the most intolerant have not been the greatest knaves, they have at least been the greatest fools.

A butt for the cabals of priests, M. Rousseau is treated in this century as Abelard was in the twelfth by the monks of St. Denis. He denied that their founder was Dionysius the Areopagite mentioned in the New Testament. From that moment they declared him an enemy to the glory and crown of France: he was consequently defamed, persecuted, and proscribed by the saints of his age.

Whoever opposes the pretensions of a monk is an impious wretch. Hence the accusations of blasphemy and atheism are now become so puerile and ridiculous. I hope, for the honour of the human understanding, that the great men of the earth, the princes, ministers, and magistrates will one day blush at having been the vile instruments of monastic rage and vengeance; that they will fear to make exile and punishment honourable by the merit of those on whom those punishments are inflicted.

The Athenians, to secure their liberty, sometimes banished a too popular citizen: the fear of a master made them proscribe a great man. The nations of Europe, secure from that danger, have not the same pretence for committing the same injustice.

68. (p. 346.) Cassiodorus thought like St. John. Religion, he said, cannot be commanded. Force makes hypocrites, and not believers. *Religio imperari non potest, quia nemo cogitur ut credat.* Faith, says St. Bernard, ought to be persuaded, not commanded; *fides suadenda, non imperanda.* Nothing is more voluntary, says Lactantius, than religion; it is nothing in him to whom it is repugnant. *Nihil est tam volantarium quam religio in qua, si animus aversus est, jam subiata, jam nulla est.* Nothing

thing is more contrary to religion, says Tertullian, than to endeavour to force belief; it is not by violence, but freely we must believe. *Non est religionis religionem cogere velle, cum sponte suscipi debeat, non vi.*

69. (p. 349.) The Pagans, it will be said, believed in priests that were impostors. Be it so: but did that belief give them a right to persecute? There are thousands who believe in a mountebank, or an old woman, rather than a physician. Has the latter a right to demand the death of the unbelievers in medicine? In corporeal as well as spiritual maladies, every one ought to choose his own physician.

70. (ibid.) Frequently, says M. Lambert of Prussia in his *Novum Organum*, we think, believe we think, and believe more than we really think and believe. This is the source of a thousand errors. If a man forbear, for example, to read prohibited books, he thinks he believes, and suspects in secret the fallacy of his belief: he is like a false pleader, who fears to read the defence of the adverse party.

71. (ibid.) The pilots of the vessels of superstition are skilful; as for the sailors, the greatest part of them are ignorant. The governing clergy require but little understanding in the clergy governed; and on this account we have nothing with which to reproach the latter. Somebody once asked Fontenelle: How does your brother the priest employ himself? In the morning, replied the philosopher, he says mass, and in the evening he does not know what he says.

72. (p. 350.) Nothing can be more absurdly subtle, say the English, than the arguments of the theologians, to prove to the ignorant Catholics the veracity of popery. These arguments would do equally well to prove the truth of the Koran, that of the Thousand and One Nights, or the tale of Mother Goose. To be convinced of this, let them apply to those stories the sophisms and distinctions of the schools, and they will find nothing in them theologically incredible.

73. (ibid.) Descartes, when persecuted, quitted France, taking,

taking, like Æneas, his *penates* with him, that is, the esteem and regret of men of sagacity. The parliament, then Aristotelian, published an *arret* against the Cartesians: their doctrine was therein condemned; as has since been that of the Encyclopedia, l'Esprit, and Emilius. There is nothing different in these *arrets* but their dates. Now the present parliaments laugh at the former; future parliaments will laugh at the present.

74. (p. 350.) See the apology by Naudé, for great men accused of magic. The author there thinks himself obliged to prove that Homer, Virgil, Zoroaster, Orpheus, Democritus, Solomon, pope Sylvester, Empedocles, Apollonius, Agrippa, Albertus Magnus, Paracelsus, &c. never were sorcerers.

75. (ibid.) The Theologians have so much abused the word *materialists*, of which they have never been able to give a clear idea, that the term at last became synonimous with a clear understanding. They now mean by that word those celebrated writers whose works are read with avidity.

76. (p. 352.) With what odious imputations have not the Catholics loaded the Protestants? What tricks have not the monks employed to irritate princes against their faithful subjects! What art to make them appear no other than rebels, who with rage in their hearts, and arms in their hands, are ever ready to scale the throne! Such, O monks, is your justice and your charity! On what do you found your calumnies? Which of the churches, the Roman or the Protestant, has the most frequently arrogated the right of dethroning kings, and depriving them at once of sceptre and life? and which has most frequently put it in practice? If we examine history, and calculate the number and kind of attempts made by one and the other, the question will soon be decided.

The protestants, they will say, have made war on princes. No: but princes have made war on them. When I am unjustly attacked, defence is a law of nature, and numerous persecuted always avail themselves of this law. It is by irritating the sovereign against his faithful subjects, that the monks put arms into the hands

of

of the protestants. All the different sects of Christians are at this day tolerated in Holland, England, and Germany; and what troubles do they there excite? Peace is established in that empire on the plan of toleration, and doubtless will remain there as long as the government shall restrain the ambition of the ecclesiastics.

To conclude; if, as I have already said, governments take no part in theological quarrels, the people will regard them as matters of no more importance than the disputes about the ancient and modern writers.

77. (p. 352.) Who has not laughed to see the Jesuits so often accuse the parliaments of revolt, and cite them before the king, as a scholar before his preceptor? France, they then said, is a nation of slaves, where each one accuses the other of sedition.

78. (p. 353.) The monks are employed incessantly in searching the scriptures for passages whose interpretation may be favourable to intolerance; but who does not know that though the scriptures are of God, the interpretations are of men.

79. (p. 354.) The warrior, frank and brave, is commonly humane; his freedom and courage set him above all fear. The priest, on the contrary, is cruel. Why? Because he is weak, false, and cowardly. Now of all creatures, says Montaigne, if women be the most cruel, it is because in general they are weak and destitute of courage. *Cruelty is always the effect of fear, weakness and cowardice.*

80. (ibid.) Nothing is more indeterminate than the signification of the word *impious*, to which is annexed a vague, confused idea of villainy. Do they by this word mean an atheist, and apply it to one who has only obscure ideas of the Deity? In this sense all men are atheists; for no one can comprehend incomprehensibility. Do they apply it to those who call themselves materialists? but if we have not yet any clear, adequate ideas of matter, we can have no clear idea of the impiety of materialism. Are we to regard as atheists those who have not the same idea of God as the Catholics? We must then call by this name the pagans, heretics,

retics, and infidels. Now in the last sense atheist is not a synonimous term with villain: it signifies a man who on certain metaphysical or theological points does not think with the monk and the Sorbonne. That the word atheism or impiety may recal to the mind some idea of villainy, to whom should it be applied? To persecutors.

81. (p. 356.) It is not to be imagined to what a degree intolerance has of late years carried idiotism in France. A man of sense informed me that during the last war a hundred idiots, when with their confessors, accused the Encyclopedists of the derangement in the finances; and God knows if any one of them ever had the least hand in their administration. Others reproached the philosophers with the little love or glory in our generals; and at that time these same philosophers were exposed to a persecution, that nothing but the love of glory and the public welfare could support. Others again attributed to the publication of the Encyclopedia, and the progress of the philosophic spirit, the defeats of the French armies; yet it was then that the very philosophic king of Prussia, and the very philosophic people of England, every where defeated those armies. Philosophy was the sprite in the story that did all the mischief.

Yet, said a great prince on this subject, every people who banish philosophy and good sense from among them, cannot promise themselves either great success in war, or a speedy re-establishment in peace.

In Portugal there are few philosophers to be found; and perhaps the weakness of the state is there in proportion to the folly and superstition of the people.

82. (p. 357.) Without the aid of the Catholic princes the Papists, as stupid, and perhaps more intolerant than the Jews, would fall into the same contempt.

83. (p. 358.) Intolerance was never greater in France: perhaps they would not now print, without castrations, M. Fleury's Ecclesiastical History, nor permit the impression of Fontaine's Fables.

What impiety might they not find in his lines on the sculptor and the statue of Jupiter* ?

84. (p. 360.) Every thing in us, even to self-love, is acquisition; we learn to love ourselves, to be humane or inhuman, virtuous or vicious. The moral man is all education and imitation.

85. (ibid.) Our various characters are the produce of our factitious passions; that they are not the effect of organisation or particular temperament is evident by their being attached to certain professions: such, according to Mr. Hume, is that of a soldier, and that of a minister of the altr, which are nearly the same in all ages, countries, and religions.

86. (p. 361.) The love of glory elevates a man above himself; it extends the faculties of the mind and soul: but he who regards that passion as the effect of a particular organisation deceives himself. The desire of glory is a passion so truly factitious and dependent on the form of government, that the legislature can always at its pleasure kindle or extinguish it in a nation.

87. (p. 363.) There is no art or science that has not its particular language: and it is the study of the language that at an advanced age renders us incapable of the study of new sciences.

88. (p. 367.) There are in every country a certain number of objects, that education offers equally to all; and it is the uniform impression of those objects that produces in the inhabitants that resemblance of ideas and sentiments to which we give the name of the spirit and character of the nation.

There is besides, a certain number of different objects that chance and education present to each individual, and it is the different impressions of these objects which produce in the same individuals

* The poet formerly owed but little to the weakness of the sculptor, who dreaded the wrath and hatred of the gods of his own making: for in this he was a child, and children are solely concerned that their dolls be not offended. T.

viduals that diversity of ideas and sentiments to which we give the name of particular spirit and character.

89. (p. 367.) I suppose that a man cannot make himself illustrious in letters without dividing his time between the world and retirement; that it is in solitude he must collect diamonds, and in the world cut, polish, and set them. It is evident that chance and fortune, which have permitted me to live by turns in the city and in the country, have done more for me than some others.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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